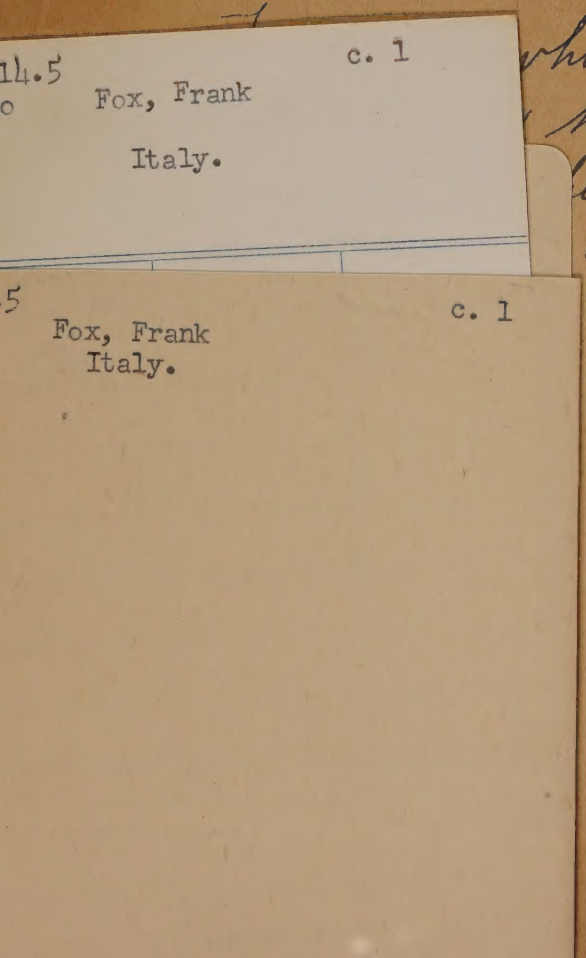
ITALY



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ITALY

Uniform with this Volume

ENGLAND

SWITZERLAND

VILLA CARLOTTA, LAKE COMO

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ITALY

BY

FRANK FOX

AUTHOR OF "ENGLAND" IN THE SAME SERIES
ALSO "RAMPARTS OF EMPIRE," "PEEPS AT THE BRITISH EMPIRE," ETC.

WITH 32 FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR

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PREFACE

DESPITE the many thousands of books about Italy there seems to be still lacking one which would give, with the help of pictures, some general and comprehensive idea of the country which is a second fatherland to every civilised man. That lack this volume seeks to supply. There was so much to be said of the Italian people and their achievements that but little of the text is devoted to Italy's natural beauty. The illustrations will compensate for that; and will also help the text to give some impression of Italian art and architecture.

The hope of visiting Italy one day is probably in the hearts of most who take a living interest in the story of this world of ours. To them I trust this volume will prove to be an introductory

friend, indicating the main roads that their curiosity may best follow. But I have written rather for others who will never feel under the Italian sun the urging at once to pride and humility in the records of our human race which comes from re-creating in thought the story of the Italian people. To them, as to the more fortunate ones who may visit Rome and Florence, there is due, as part of the heritage of civilisation, some knowledge of Italy. If I have helped any to come more easily to that knowledge, it will be a service of some usefulness.

FRANK FOX.

London, 1913.

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RAPALLO, ON THE ITALIAN RIVIERA

ITALY

CHAPTER I

THE CHARM OF ITALY

Italy is a land of great natural loveliness. Set like a long brooch in the bosom of the blue Mediterranean, her coast-line offers to the eye, here the ravishment of beautiful bays such as that of Naples or those of the Italian Riviera; there the majesty of towering forest-crowned cliffs; and yet again the insinuating mysterious beauty of a chain of lagoons such as shelter Venice. Almost always the water of the sea is bright and glowing. It has its hours of anger and its days of melancholy, but customarily the Mediterranean on the coast of Italy smiles back to a sunny sky a gay greeting.

In the one respect alone of her bright setting in the blue Mediterranean, Italy is favoured

much by Fortune. But mountains, plains, and lakes come to help in making scenes of natural beauty which may not be surpassed easily in the world. Over the northern plains stand the Alps like a guardian barrier encircling a glowing panorama of vineyard and orchard and cornfield with protective arms. A scene, fair in itself with the rich colouring of garden, field, and fruitful farm, the gem-like lakes, takes from these sentinel Alps an enhancing beauty. Their bright foot-hills, their austere pine-clad sides, their towering snow-clad peaks, quick to flush with heavenly colours as they take the greeting of the sun, give to the plain of Northern Italy a distinction of beauty which few other landscapes that I know can rival. Nature seems to have set for herself a stage on which might worthily be played out the greatest dramas of human life.

But with all this fine distinction of natural beauty, of sea and mountain and valley and lake and river, it is more true of Italy, perhaps, than of any other country that her landscapes draw the pilgrim from all corners of the world, not so much because of the beauty of form and foliage and eager response of warm earth to warm sky, but because of the human interest which attaches

itself to all the soil of Italy. Take away that human interest, strip from Italy the memory of her mighty dead, and the larger share of her attraction would vanish.

Ruskin, describing the approach to the Alps through the Jura, wrote :

I came out presently on the edge of the ravine, the solemn murmur of its waters rose suddenly from beneath, mixed with the singing of the thrushes among the pine boughs ; and, on the opposite side of the valley, walled all along as it was by grey cliffs of limestone, there was a hawk sailing slowly off their brow, touching them nearly with its wings, and with the shadows of the pines flickering upon his plumage from above ; but with the fall of a hundred fathoms under his breast, and the curling pools of the green river gliding and glittering dizzily beneath him, their foam-globes moving with him as he flew.

Then he strove to imagine the same scene in a land without memories and without human interest :

The flowers in an instant lost their light, the river its music; the hills became oppressively desolate; a heaviness in the boughs of the darkened forest showed how much of their former power had been dependent upon a life which was not theirs, how much of the glory of the imperishable, or continually renewed, creation is reflected from things more precious than it, in its renewing. These ever-springing flowers and ever-flowing

streams had to be dyed by the deep colours of human endurance, valour, and virtue; and the crests of the sable hills that rose against the evening sky received a deeper worship, because their far shadows fell eastward over the iron walls of Joux and the four-square keep of Gransons.

That expresses, in the exalted language of the most poetic of English prose-writers, what very many of us feel more or less consciously when as travellers we seek to explore the beauties of foreign lands. In an odd case some scene, which is of wonder as well as of beauty, in which Nature exacts our surprise as well as our admiration, will win the tribute of a general and continued admiration. Usually it is the landscape which human genius has enriched with memory that claims the constant crowds of worshippers. Human beings, we are only passionately interested when our human affairs are concerned, and we gaze with awe and affection on a scene of natural beauty only when we can people the stage which it presents with great creatures of our own flesh and recall that, "Here a hero stood," or, "There the poet who saw deep into the souls of men paced as he mused."

It is this which makes the charm of Italy. Those great snow-clad peaks, flushed with the

morning kiss of the sun, showing a cold, virginal beauty under the light of the moon, are in themselves purely beautiful. But there are in the world other mountains as beautiful. Nature is lavish with such gifts of form. But there are no other mountains where one may feel to the same extent that

> sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

Looking up from the plains of Lombardy to the crest of the guardian Alps, or, from their passes, gazing down upon those plains, the great Pageant of Civilisation passes before our eyes. We may see Hannibal—filled with a fierce hatred for the Roman Republic, then engaged in clearing the way for a new and better-ordered scheme of life—leading his Punic cohorts to grapple with the detested enemy on his very hearth. Rome had fought Carthage down inch by inch. Finding sea-power necessary to conquer a naval nation, she had invented a new strategy of warfare by sea, and with its help had taken command of the Mediterranean. Then the desperate genius of Hannibal launched against his enemy an army

which, crossing the narrow Straits of Gibraltar, fought its way through Spain and the south of France, and conquered the Alps on its path to the Battle of Cannae, which made the Roman power totter to its base.

As we see the Alps we may people them with that swarthy Punic host, its pomp of war marred and tattered by the storms and snows of the rampart mountains. Or we may picture the wild Gauls with their Druids pouring down the passes, again and again, to plunder and devastate the rich civilisation growing up under the practical and ordered life of the Roman power, until the final avenger of civilisation appears in the first Caesar, taming the mountains with good roads, and making the passage of the Alps no longer a thing of dread but part of the usual routine of the march of his civilising legions. Over those Alpine roads Caesar's eagles made steady way, to give settled order to France, to colonise Britain, to put a temporary check on the flood of Germanic hordes, which were in time to come back over them and impose a new race element on the makers of the race of modern Italy. After the Roman power had failed the Alps gazed with the same serenity on barbarian hordes rushing to

the ravaging of Italy—the Goths, the Vandals, and, most fierce of all, the Huns led by "the Scourge of God," fierce, squat little barbarians from the steppes of Asia coming like a cloud of vultures to feast on the corpse of the Roman Empire. Then, later, when on the ashes of the secular Empire had risen the Empire of the Roman Church, the Alps saw many a pompous procession of worldly and priestly pride. Rome again was the centre of the world, with all roads leading to her temples over these mountains.

The Alps thus become, as it were, a Chorus to history. They appear not as a mere range of mountains, but as an observer sitting in calm review of all the great events of the world, seeing the rise of powers of Light and the powers of Darkness, associated in some wise with every great event and great name in the growth of human thought, the monuments particularly of Hannibal and of Caesar, of Attila, of Charlemagne, and of Napoleon. The Alps are witnesses alike to the vanity of human personal ambition and to the greatness of human collective thought. They have been the chief trying ground of human aspiration and achievement from the march of Hannibal, taking many days over their

conquest, down to the flight yesterday of the modern aeroplane passing over their defiles in as many minutes.

All this rich association with our human race the Alps have won because they are the guardian sentinels of Italy, the land which was marked out by Fate as the nursery of civilisation. The Romans who organised the Italians for the conquest of the world and the building up of the foundations on which has been erected the human polity of to-day, originated little or nothing of the arts of civilisation. They borrowed from Greece (as Greece had borrowed from Egypt), at first indirectly through the Greek colonies in Sicily and Italy, then directly from a conquered Athens. But they were able to bring a practical power of organisation to the task of subduing barbarism. Thus Italy, led by Rome, gave laws, religion, orderly institutions, to the greater part of Europe, to northern Africa, and to much of Asia.

So, on crossing the guardian Alps, the pilgrim from abroad entering Italy is confronted by the earliest shrines of his civilisation. One may imagine him coming from the United States, from some great modern city like Chicago, which was tenanted by a few wandering Indians

LOOKING DOWN THE VAL FORMAZZA

all through the ages whilst the Roman Republic was being nursed to greatness, whilst the Roman Empire was dissolving before the barbarians, whilst the Renaissance was bringing a new dawn to European civilisation, whilst a torn and perplexed Italy was frittering away its powers in internecine warfare. His great city is, indeed, not much older than the latest phase of Italian destiny, that movement for unity under the House of Savoy which made Italy a nation once again. Yet, in the most real sense, he will find here in Italy the monuments and records of all the things that enter most deeply into his life at Chicago. The laws under which he lives are very largely the direct children of Roman codes. The Christian religion which he professes established itself here in Italy against the forces of heathenism, and from here sent out preachers to all the then known world. The commercial system, the skill of civic organisation, and the engineering conquests of Nature of which his modern city is proud, had their origins here in Italy. The Art and Letters of to-day owe their all to Italy, who in the dark Middle Ages nurtured and diffused the flame of civilisation.

The world to-day in truth owes all that it

possesses of thought and culture to Italy. The debt is due not only to the organising and conquering power of the Roman Republic, which carried the torch forward over three continents and transformed as if by magic naked barbarisms to gracious civilisations. It is due far more to the heroic effort which enfeebled and cruelly-ravaged Italy made during the centuries which followed the disruption of the Roman Empire to keep alight the sacred flame of human thought. During that period of darkness and disaster, north of the Alps there was nothing, except perhaps here and there a struggling memory of the Roman civilisation which had been trampled flat by the barbarians. South of the Alps an Italian people, Latin in language and in culture, kept not only the memory but the actual institutions and practices of the Greek civilisation which Rome had inherited, and of the intensely practical and human Roman civilisation, inferior to that of Greece in its ideals, immeasurably superior in its practical value for workaday life.

Gothic invaders and immigrants swept over Italy. The Lombards, a fiercer race, crossed the Alps to plunder and remained to colonise. The Huns rushed down with cruel ravages.

Throughout all, the Italian people maintained the Temple of Civilisation, kept alive there the sacred flame. As Mr. Henry Taylor eloquently writes in his study of the Medieval Mind :

> The Italian stock remained predominant over all the incomers of northern blood. . . . With weakened hands it still held to the education, the culture of its own past: it still read its ancient literature and imitated it in miserable verse. The incoming barbarians had hastened the land's intellectual downfall. But all the plagues of inroad and pestilence and famine, which intermittently devastated Italy from the fifth to the tenth century, left some squalid continuity of education. And those barbarian stocks which stayed in that home of the classics became imbued with whatever culture existed around them, and tended gradually to coalesce with the Italians. . . . In Italy a general survival of law and institution, custom and tradition, endured so far as these various elements of the Italian civilisation had not been lost or dispossessed. . . .
>
> In Italy as in no other country, the currents of antique education, disturbed yet unbroken, carried clear across that long period of invasions, catastrophes, and reconstructions which began with Alaric.

This, then, to the traveller, from whatever part of the world he may come, is the chief charm of Italy ; that he enters into the country as into his ancestral home ; that, no matter what his interests in life—even though they be very narrow and " practical "—he must en-

counter here the monuments of much that he cherishes and reveres. It was the chief nursery of the world's Religion, Science, Law, Art, Literature; the little Ark of Refuge in which were gathered those rescued to carry on the work of civilisation when the Deluge of Barbarians flowed over the world.

Italy is of exquisite and varied natural beauty:

—What hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine;
  In lands of palm, of orange blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road:
  How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco basking glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
  To meet the sun and sunny waters
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue;
  Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove
Yet present in his natal grove,
  Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering now from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
  I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most.
Not the clipt palm of which they boast;
  But distant colour, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
Alight amid its olives green:
  Or olive-hoary cape in ocean:
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread:
  And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

But it is not, I repeat, the natural beauty which is Italy's chief charm to the traveller. It is the thought of her mighty dead and their deeds which made this our twentieth century and its civilisation possible. Even in those lines I have here quoted, in which Tennyson sought to give an impression of hill and flower and tree only, the thought of Columbus comes to him to heighten the interest of the picture. So it is ever in Italy. The whole landscape is illumined with the light of human greatness. The land is a beautiful land, in lake and grove and moun-

tain. But more beautiful it is because of Regulus, Gracchus, Caesar, Virgil, Horace, Justinian, Aurelius, Dante, Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Francis of Assisi, and a thousand others whose names leap to the mind at the mention of Italy.

CHAPTER II

ITALY IN THE MAKING

THE governing factors in the evolution of a civilised people are not as yet perfectly understood. Gradually some guiding knowledge on the subject is being attained as the circumstances attending the early growth of great peoples are laboriously analysed. One general rule already seems clear, that a people never emerges from barbarism to a fine civilisation in its own original home. All the great nations have been built up by migrant peoples, and began as colonies.

The Mediterranean littoral is clearly enough marked out by its climate, by its invitations to trade and commerce, by its fertile lands, by its good supplies of the useful metals, as a fitting setting for a great civilisation. But the aboriginal Mediterranean peoples were not destined to bring to realisation their first impulse towards

civilisation. The Hellenic people and the Italic people—the two great races of the Mediterranean, the former excelling in thought and in art, the latter far excelling in the practical application to humanity of the principles of philosophy and of æsthetics — both entered as colonists on to the Mediterranean littoral. Modern research puts their original home in that area of Scandinavia and Germany which was later to colonise Great Britain, much of France, of Southern Europe, and even of Russia. It may be accepted with certainty that both " the fair-haired Achaeans " of Homeric Greece and the wanderers who founded Rome were of a Nordic race. There was, probably enough, a pre-existent civilisation of a high order both in the Grecian and the Italian peninsulas, for the Mediterranean had always had its civilising effect. But it was the impulse of a northern colonisation which provided the foundation for those two world-making developments—the Grecian civilisation and the Roman civilisation.

So far as we can read dimly the facts about race movements of prehistoric times, at some period in the Neolithic Age the Nordic people swarmed down from their cold homes around

GIRGENTI, THE AKRAGAS OF THE GREEKS, THE AGRIGENTUM OF THE ROMANS

the west Baltic to the far Mediterranean coast in search of warmer and richer lands. They were a tall, blue-eyed, savage, chaste people. Probably they were met by peoples of much lesser stature, darker in skin, more polished in manner, but not so virtuous nor so resolute. In Greece the Nordic invaders encountered the Minoan civilisation, in Italy the Etruscan, Sabine, and Latian peoples. There are still to be found in Italy traces of the old Etruscan civilisation, brought to a high pitch as it had been by an aboriginal Mediterranean people. Not until after the Nordic invasion was the course of Italy set to world greatness. The persistence of the Nordic influence can be traced to the latest days of the Roman Empire in the governing types of the Italian nation, as their features show on medals or in busts.

In the Italian peninsula then, many years before the foundation of Rome, there had been superimposed upon the native peoples, to a very marked extent in the north, to a great deal less extent in the far south, a Scandinavian conqueror, just as the Norman was later superimposed upon the Anglo-Saxon in England. The invaders were less cultivated than the people whose lands

they seized, but more vigorous, more practical, capable too of a higher brain development. They learned from their hosts, and then began to improve upon what they had learned.

Meanwhile there was another tendency at work moulding the fate of Italy. On the Hellenic peninsula the civilising of the Nordic invaders had progressed more quickly. Probably, too, the native civilisation which they encountered had, through its closer proximity to highly-advanced Egypt, reached a more advanced stage than on the Italic peninsula. The vigorous communities of Greece began to send out colonies to settle in Sicily and in Southern Italy, where the influence of the new Scandinavian element in Italy was weakest. Intercourse with these Greek colonies helped Italian civilisation to advance.

As the time ripened it was only necessary for the call of bold leadership to come to organise the Italian peoples, then foremost on the earth for vigour, second on the earth in the culture of civilisation, so that they might go forth and conquer the world. At the proper moment the little city of Rome came forward to impose its overlordship upon Italy and to lead Italy towards its mighty conquests.

The real story of the foundation of Rome can only be guessed at. There are many myths and allegories to choose from if a poetical, without necessarily a correct, explanation of her greatness is desired. Of these far the most picturesque is that which makes Aeneas, one of the nobles of Troy, escape from the fate which overtook most of the inhabitants of that city when it was captured by the Greeks, and after many wanderings arrive in Italy, to found on the banks of the Tiber a new Troy. The story has as much, or as little, truth as the average of the classical myths. It was eagerly welcomed by the Romans in their first flush of greatness. They had conquered a large part of the world then, and had a little time to spare to look up a national "Family Tree." The Greeks, entering the field of literature first, had appropriated for themselves most of the desirable associations with gods and heroes. The story of Aeneas brought Rome into the current of the Olympic life.

The truth about the foundation of Rome can be guessed at from the legend of Romulus and Remus, and from the tale of the carrying off of the Sabine women. Probably there had settled

down on a hilly fastness by the Tiber side some particularly fierce band of the semi-savage invaders from the north. They tried there to preserve something of the wild freedom of their ancestral forests, and, mixing their blood less with the aboriginals than their fellow-colonists, kept to an exceptional degree the warlike courage, the wildness, the vigour of their forebears. As they gradually became civilised, they softened but little. Their manners settled to a harder mould than was usual in Latium. Their method of government was more free, their thirst for war greater.

As these Romans grew in numbers and found that they needed more territory, they jostled their neighbours out of their lands with force. The area of conquest quickly grew. Rome became a considerable state, then mistress of a ring of Italian states which became subject to her without being actually incorporated in her citizenship. In time Roman citizenship was extended so as to take beneath its mantle all the Italian people. But that was a much later development. Still later, the barbarians conquered by Rome were also admitted to citizenship. That was in the last phase of the Empire,

when an overswollen power was drifting quickly to ruin.

The wars by which Rome compulsorily united Italy were very stubborn ones, showing that there was not any very great extent of difference between the Romans and their neighbours. Sometimes this work of nation-making by conquest had to be stopped for a while until an incursion of the Goths was beaten off, or a revolt of slaves grappled with. But with a fine unconquerable purpose the Roman Republic held on its way, and soon all Italy was Roman, and Roman colonies were pushing out across the sea—towards Sicily in the first instance.

Over Sicily, with her flourishing Greek colonies, Rome had her first quarrel with the mighty power of Carthage, a Phoenician settlement in North Africa occupying the lands which are now called Tunis and Tripoli. The contest with Carthage evoked all the best fighting qualities of Rome, and there emerged from the struggle that eagerness for world-dominion which forced the growth of the Roman Empire. It was very characteristic of the Roman of the day that, finding his inferiority at sea impossible of speedy remedy by training, he set himself to change

the conditions of sea warfare. The Carthaginians, hereditarily merchants and good sailors, manœuvred skilfully their ships to ram and destroy the ships of the enemy. The Roman, not having time to learn to play the game of naval warfare on those lines, built ships which would bring the conditions of a battle at sea as near as possible to the conditions of a battle on land. His ships were designed to grapple with those of the enemy so that the crews could fight the issue out on the interlocked decks. They were fitted with onagers and balistes to discharge arrows and javelins and balls of stone and metal.

This way of overcoming an incurable inferiority by transferring the contest to another plane was successful; and the Roman Republic soon was mistress of the seas, conqueror of Carthage, and avowedly ambitious to carry her sway by wars of conquest over all the world.

Curiously well-fitted was the Roman state for this task. In the first place patriotism and national pride were "organised" to an extent that no other great nation has ever known. The *Res publica*, the public good, the "common wealth," was everything; the right of the individual when it came into conflict with the

public good was nothing. The sentiment of the people was democratic and freedom-loving. But for the Commonwealth's sake they were willing in times of danger to submit to the most absolute despotism. Religion was made the servant of the state, all religious rites having a motive of patriotism. Military courage and simple labour alike were exalted. The Roman word for the highest worthiness was *virtus*, *i.e.* manly strength and courage. Women were held in high respect, and the " Roman matron " has become proverbial in all the tongues of the world for courage, fidelity, and devotion to her family. The heroes and heroines of Rome and their deeds illustrate the robustness of the national virtue. Brutus (the slayer of Tarquin), Curtius, Horatius, Cincinnatus, Regulus—these, and with them many noble women, showed in their deeds the supreme degree of qualities which were common to all the people.

The first guiding principle of Roman life was the duty of the individual to sacrifice himself to the state. Love of life, the closest ties of kindred had to be swept aside when Rome demanded. The second guiding principle was a practical common-sense which insisted on moderation and

prudence in all things, and unfaltering resolution in carrying out an enterprise. The intensely practical resoluteness of the Roman is shown in the stories of his conquests. He could be a generous combatant; also he could be a merciless and treacherous one. It depended on what the circumstances demanded. After conquest he was generous, placable, tolerant. His aim was to give to the conquered all the benefits of Italian civilisation. The Roman road, the Roman bath, the Roman system of law followed in the path of the Roman soldier; and it was the common thing to find nations that had fought fiercely against the Roman armies fighting even more fiercely, a few years afterwards, for the privilege of remaining under the Roman yoke.

Ruskin, with his sympathetic insight, recognised that the Romans were not a fighting people for the sake of fighting, but fighters for the spread of their Dominion, which meant civilisation, and peaceful in intention afterwards. But, curiously enough, he did not approve of this.

"I have not yet," he wrote in *The Crown of Wild Olive*, "investigated the Roman character enough to tell you the causes of this; but I believe, paradoxical as

POMPEII, COVERED AND UNCOVERED

it may seem to you, that however truly the Roman might say of himself that he was born of Mars, and suckled by the wolf, he was nevertheless, at heart, more of a farmer than a soldier. The exercises of war were with him practical, not poetical; his poetry was in domestic life only, and the object of battle, 'pacis imponere morem.' And the arts are extinguished in his hands, and do not rise again, until, with Gothic chivalry, there comes back into the mind of Europe a passionate delight in war itself, for the sake of war. And then, with the romantic knighthood which can imagine no other noble employment,—under the fighting kings of France, England, and Spain, and under the fighting dukeships and citizenships of Italy, art is born again, and rises to her height in the great valleys of Lombardy and Tuscany, through which there flows not a single stream, from all their Alps or Apennines, that did not once run dark red from battle; and it reaches its culminating glory in the city which gave to history the most intense type of soldiership yet seen among men,—the city whose armies were led in their assault by their king, led through it to victory by their king, and so led, though that king of theirs was blind and in the extremity of his age."

The modern English-speaking peoples will probably approve generally the practical, unpoetical view of the Roman about fighting. It was that view which made the British Empire and extended the power of the United States. The opposite of that view, the "poetical desire" for fighting for fighting's own sake,

is a Kilkenny-cat idea which has never led to greatness.

The decline of the Roman Empire began when the capacity of the Italian people to keep pace with the too-rapid extension of the Imperial territory ceased. The wars that had made the Empire had been fought almost wholly by Italians, though occasionally a barbarian ally had given some slight help. Whilst the Italians were drawn to all quarters of the world under their Eagles, the Italian blood in the home-land began to be dangerously thinned. More and more the land passed to the cultivation of slaves drawn from foreign countries. More and more, too, the land came to be the instrument of pleasure rather than of use. Wealth pouring in from the conquered provinces gnawed at the vitals of Republican virtue. The age of Cincinnatus had passed with no hope of ever returning.

The decline of the national *morale*, and the probable effect of that decline upon the Roman power, were not unobserved by contemporary patriots. Before the days of Caesar there had been ominous warnings of the tottering of the Republic. That great statesman and soldier

seemed to restore something of her pristine vigour to Rome, and Augustus, the first Emperor, inherited from the Republic a rule stretching as wide almost as the known world. But he saw the causes of decay still unsubdued, and set himself to encourage the revival of the old simplicity of life and the old agricultural pursuits. His laudable efforts did little good to the Italy of the day, but conferred great benefits on the world at large. The lyrics of Horace in praise of the husbandman's life, the more deliberated Georgics of Virgil, are the world's gains because a far-seeing Roman Emperor sought to enlist the writers of his day on the side of a good ideal of national life.

In spite of good advice and of ample warnings, the Italian people of the Roman Empire refused to attempt to toil back on an upward path of regeneration. In truth, the conquest of the world had exhausted the national vitality, and the flood of riches pouring in from all the world had corrupted the national character. The penalty of having climbed too high was dizziness, and that headlong descent the tragedy of which Gibbon has told in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

But it is a sign of the wonderfully enduring qualities of Roman institutions that they survived for many centuries the deep-rooted national decay. The Roman Empire, in time divorced from Italy and finding a new capital at Constantinople, did not finally perish until the sixteenth century of the Christian era. And before then in Italy the Renaissance and the marvellous growth of the world-renowned city states beneath the Alps was to prove the persistence of the instinct for rule in the Italian people.

Of that I shall speak in another chapter. Of the Italy who was mistress of the world and whose glory reached its greatest height with the Augustan Empire, the Italy of to-day has countless monuments, and these will be the first to attract the attention of the traveller interested in the early springs from which has sprung our twentieth-century civilisation. Much of classical Italy has been destroyed and defaced: partly by the ancient barbarians; partly by the fanatics of the early Church; partly by the hand of time; partly by the Vandals of modern times with their impertinent curiosity and their devouring acquisitiveness. But much still re-

mains; and, fortunately, there is now a steady determination on the part of the Italian people to put an end to modern Vandalism. Italy is no longer a mine in which any prospector may dig for souvenirs. The guardianship of ancient monuments and the work of archaeological research are both matters now of jealous national care.

So jealous is that care that research work on the part of foreigners is now not generally encouraged, the Italians wishing to keep both the general direction and the particular routine in their own hands.

On this point there comes to the memory a story of the late King Edward VII. which I do not think has yet been in print. A wealthy American, eager to devote some of his money to archaeological research work in Italy, enlisted the sympathy of his President, and was armed with a letter endorsing and supporting some particular scheme of excavation he had in mind. The German Emperor, too, proved sympathetic, and gave the project his blessing. Then the British monarch was approached. He was suavely but firmly determined to say or write nothing at all about the project.

"It is purely," he said, "a matter for my brother of Italy. I cannot presume to dictate to him or advise him."

King Edward's cautiousness was sound. The project when it came to be published aroused resentment in Italy, as constituting a foreign interference with a purely Italian matter. Those personages who had come forward to support and to recommend the project found themselves involved in the hostility poured out upon a tactless project. Italy made it clear that she wished to keep undivided control of her past as well as of her future.

Each year now sees some further rolling back of the curtain from Italy's past, and the classical life in particular is being clearly illustrated. The ruins of ancient temples, fora, triumphal arches, shrines, baths, aqueducts, and villas are everywhere, and whole cities are still buried underground. But their excavation cannot be attempted, as it is financially impossible for the state to expropriate all the land under which ancient remains are buried.

Professor Boni's recent discoveries in the forum of ancient Rome include proof of the existence of lifts, *pegmata*, which were used in Imperial times

and were known to the Romans as far back as 50 B.C. The history of the Palatine is now exposed to view, from the earliest to the latest times of classical antiquity. Important excavations are being carried out in the Baths of Caracalla, and researches are being made in the Imperial Fora of Rome, which it is proposed to completely isolate. The Baths of Diocletian and all the ancient remains below the Palatine have been isolated. Professor Dante Vaglieri is unearthing the city of Ostia, the ancient Port of Rome, and measures have been taken to avert the danger of its being submerged by the Tiber. The Villa of Horace at Licenza is likewise being excavated, and the Etruscan necropolis of Cervetri will, it is hoped, be soon entirely explored.

Archaeological work is by no means limited to Rome and its neighbourhood. Excavations are going on in Umbria and in the Marches, where, at Belmonte Piceno, Filottrano, and Novilara most important prehistorical discoveries have been made. Professor Spinazzola recently uncovered about 300 feet of the Via dell' Abbondanza at Pompeii, and the discoveries he made are of great importance.

The visitor to Italy can now follow with some

exact knowledge, with faithful care, in the footsteps of Hannibal, noting his victories and his defeats; can trace the growth of the Roman dominion in the roads, and of the Roman luxury in the baths and theatres and villas which still survive; and can follow the records of those Servile Wars which were the first signs alike of the degenerating social condition and the growing dangers threatening the Roman Commonwealth. The soldiers, the statesmen, the demagogues even of ancient Rome have left their records for the benefit of the curious to-day. The ancient life, its austerities, its luxuries, its ceremonials, may be re-created from its surviving memorials with some fidelity, thanks to the excavator groping with scientific care among the buried stones of the past.

LIBRARY OF THE HOUSE OF DOMITIAN ON THE PALATINE

CHAPTER III

THE ITALY OF THE RENAISSANCE

More near to our modern understanding than classic Italy is the Italy of the Renaissance, which lit a beacon fire as the signal for the world to set about painting pictures, making music and poetry once more, and gave, too, a fresh impulse to the study of science and of the philosophy of government. The Renaissance put civilisation again into the debt of Italy. The First Italy had, with the aid of its genius for the organisation of power, carried Mediterranean civilisation over most of Europe and a large portion of Africa and Asia. The Second Italy was destined to have an influence on human thought and human art which remains still as a living impulse, which still speaks with an authority never successfully questioned.

The ancient culture of Italy found itself

attacked from two directions as the material power of the Roman Empire crumbled. The barbarians, rushing in from gloomy forest and desolate steppe, had no knowledge of, or sympathy with, literature or art. Almost invariably they ravaged and ruined. Sometimes their haste or carelessness left the ruin incomplete. Occasionally, the history of the times tells us, a happy contempt saved from destruction precious records of civilisation. They record of the Goths, after their great victory over the Emperor Valens in the Balkans, that when a collection was made of all the books that could be seized in preparation for a bonfire, one of the barbarian leaders prevented the sacrifice.

"It is by reading these books that the Romans have become weak and timid," he argued, "and so we have been able to overcome them. Let us leave the books so that they may continue to corrupt our enemies."

The reasoning was fortunate if unsound. At another crisis of civilisation, when the Islam horde broke in upon the cities of Egypt, a savage conqueror argued differently.

"If these books," he said, referring to the library of Alexandria, "are in accord with the

Koran they are useless and may be destroyed. If they are against the Koran they are pernicious and must be destroyed."

In addition to the destructive rage of the barbarians the Italian classic culture had another enemy. Early Christianity had declared war on the luxury, the sensuality, the superstition of the pagan world. Very much alike of the Art and Letters of the time naturally was bound up with the services of the ancient religion or the corrupt luxury of the people, and came under suspicion, therefore, as a pernicious influence. Early Christianity to a great extent ranged itself as the enemy of pagan culture as well as of pagan religion. Fortunately there was not a general rule of intolerance to art and literature. If the Puritan campaign of "idol-smashing" in England had had the general sympathy of all the people not an English church of the Middle Ages would have survived to these days. If the Early Christian Church had been of one mind in its hatred of pagan culture the work of destruction, begun by the barbarians, would have been tragically completed, and neither building, statue, picture, nor manuscript would have survived to tell of the achievements of

Greece and Rome, and to be the foundation for modern culture. Whilst, however, some of the apostles of the New Order—more especially those who looked forward to a literal and immediate fulfilment of the prophecies regarding a Second Coming of Christ, which would usher in the end of the world—pursued with vindictiveness every monument and record and custom of pagan life, there were others who set themselves to guard and to preserve the manuscripts, statues, and traditions of the classic culture.

In Italy, it can be safely concluded, Early Christianity was more liberal than in any other part of the world. It did not share those excesses of asceticism which marked the primitive Church in Africa. Nor did it devote very much attention to the mazy speculations which engaged the Greek mind when it turned to Christianity. The Italian Church was fairly tolerant and practical. Besides, classical paganism survived in Italy with some strength for a long time after Christianity had become the established religion of the Roman Empire. Far into the Christian era a predominantly pagan Roman Senate aroused the wrath of a Christian Caesar of the Empire by seeking to make him *Pontifex Maximus*,

following the old tradition by which the Emperor of Rome was also high priest of the worship of the Roman gods.

The comparative liberalism of Early Christianity in Rome and the survival in Italy of a great population of classical pagans, who naturally sought to cherish their waning faith by an ardent cultivation of pagan culture, alike helped to make the subsequent Renaissance possible in Italy. But the chief prompting to that great efflorescence was the continued existence in Italy—degenerate as she was, saddened by many sorrows, trampled down by many invaders—of a national spirit. Italy at her lowest did not forget the glories of her past. Carved up by conquerors, broken up after the conquests of the Langobardi in 568 into fragmentary states, made the victim of the new Germanic powers arising on the ruins of the Roman Empire, she did not altogether disintegrate. With instinctive care she kept alive the lamp of education, and prepared for that glorious intellectual triumph of the world which was to spread the glory of Italy to a wider fame than that won by the Roman legions.

The Roman Empire having transferred its

capital to Constantinople, a city which was in a better position to hold the Eastern Marches against the barbarians, and which could stand sentinel over Africa and Asia as well as Europe, the political importance of Rome and of Italy declined. Italy missed thus some of the infection of the Asiatic influences which began to creep over the government of the Empire, and that fact helped also to keep the Italian soil ready for the springing up of the flower of a new European culture. The subordinate Western Emperor, who reigned at Rome, or later at Milan or Ravenna, was sometimes, of course, a barbarian. But on the whole the Roman court kept to a European tradition, whilst at Constantinople European ideas were profoundly modified by Asiatic thought and custom, so producing the Byzantine type of civilisation.

The visitor to Italy who is interested in the twilight of the Roman Empire in Italy, merging insensibly as it did into the dawn of the Renaissance, should pay a particular pilgrimage to Isola Comacina, the little island on the Lake of Como, which was the last of Italy to hold out for the Roman Empire. It is but a little patch of land, under half a mile in length, under a

quarter of a mile in breadth, and it floats on the bosom of Como with a narrow strait between it and the mainland.

Italy has been for all time a land of heroic little places. Specks of her territory, which would not make a decent farm by acreage, have won fame which puts to an inferior place the achievements of some great kingdoms. But surely this little islet of Isola is the greatest instance in the world of an heroic David among nations. One hears of Isola first in the sixth century, though doubtless the islet was well enough known to the ancient Romans, and perhaps sheltered some rich man's villa in the days when Cato was consul. It was when the Roman Empire was tottering to its fall, and across the roads of the Alps alien invaders were pouring down to the loot of Italy, that Isola comes forward to the middle of the world-stage. A stout fight it put up against King Flavius of Lombardy, who had conquered all Italy down to Calabria, holding its little half-mile of length for the Roman Empire which was then grappling with deadly foes on the Thracian plain. Refugees from other parts of Italy, aspiring still to be Romans and Italians, found their way to Isola,

and its strong fortifications held out for long against the northern invaders.

The name of the general of that heroic defence, General Francioni, has survived. A final attack by King Flavius, subjecting the tiny stronghold to a continuous siege and assault for six months, was in the end successful, and the flag of the Roman Empire vanished from Italy.

That, however, did not end the history of Isola Comacina. When King Flavius of Lombardy died the islanders freed themselves again. Under Duke Gandolfo of Bergamo they fought against the power of Turin. The end of this stormy little island's history, so far as the Middle Ages were concerned, came in 1169, when it was taken by assault, its fortifications razed to the ground, and its little area completely devastated. The dispossessed inhabitants took refuge on the mainland and built the village of Nuova Isola. The little island comes back to the pages of history again in the nineteenth century, when a band of Croatian rebels against Austria were exiled there for some months.

But we must get back to the Middle Ages and their merging into the Renaissance of Italy. The Early and Middle Ages, as we have seen,

VILLA PLINIANA, LAKE COMO

had threatened the existence of classical culture from two sides—the attacks of the barbarians on the one side, on the other the attacks of Christian divines preaching asceticism as the one rule of life, and finding little or no room in the godly man's scheme of conduct for any intellectual interest. (One may cite in illustration Jerome's dream of exclusion from Heaven because of his too great joy in classic reading, Augustine's struggle to turn his mind away from any secular learning as being inconsistent with real piety.) Both attacks were doomed to fail; and so in time the Italian Renaissance, nurtured from the classic culture, burst upon Europe with its new gospel of a full life in this world, its revival of literature, sculpture, painting, architecture, and science.

I do not know anywhere of a more vivid picture of the final struggle of the Renaissance against the Early Church tradition of asceticism than in Browning's "Fra Lippo Lippi." The great painter is telling some men of the city-watch of Florence how he came to be a painter and a monk, the latter by the compulsion of starvation, the former through the discovery by the chief monk that he had a talent for decoration. There-

upon he is asked to decorate a wall of the church, and does so, to shock the holy men with the realism of his work :

Thank you ! my head being crammed, their walls a blank,
Never was such prompt disemburdening.
First, every sort of monk, the black and white,
I drew them, fat and lean : then, folks at church,
From good old gossips waiting to confess
Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-ends,—
To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot,
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting there
With the little children round him in a row
Of admiration, half for his beard and half
For that white anger of his victim's son
Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm,
Signing himself with the other because of Christ
(Whose sad face on the Cross sees only this
After the passion of a thousand years).
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head
(Which the intense eyes looked through) came at eve
On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf,
Her pair of ear-rings, and a bunch of flowers
(The brute took growling), prayed, and then was gone.
I painted all, then cried, " 'Tis ask and have ;
" Choose, for more's ready ! "—laid the ladder flat,
And showed my covered bit of cloister-wall.
The monks closed in a circle and praised loud
Till checked (taught what to see and not to see,
Being simple bodies)—" That's the very man !
" Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog !
" That woman's like the Prior's niece who comes
" To care about his asthma : it's the life ! "
But there my triumph's straw-fire flared and funked ;
Their betters took their turn to see and say :

The Prior and the learned pulled a face
And stopped all that in no time. " How ? what's here ?
" Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all !
" Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true
" As much as pea and pea ! it's devil's-game !
" Your business is not to catch men with show,
" With homage to the perishable clay,
" But lift them over it, ignore it all,
" Make them forget there's such a thing as flesh.
" Your business is to paint the souls of men—
" Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke . . . no, it's not . . .
" It's vapour done up like a new-born babe—
" (In that shape when you die it leaves your mouth)
" It's . . . well, what matters talking, it's the soul !
" Give us no more of body than shows soul !
" Here's Giotto, with his Saint a-praising God,
" That sets us praising,—why not stop with him ?
" Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head
" With wonder at lines, colours, and what not ?
" Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms !
" Rub all out, try at it a second time.
" Oh, that white smallish female with the breasts,
" She's just my niece . . . Herodias, I would say,—
" Who went and danced and got men's heads cut off !
" Have it all out ! " Now, is this the sense, I ask ?
A fine way to paint soul, by painting body
So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go further
And can't fare worse ! Thus, yellow does for white
When what you put for yellow's simply black,
And any sort of meaning looks intense
When all beside itself means and looks nought.
Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
Both in their order ?—Take the prettiest face,
The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint—is it so pretty

You can't discover if it means hope, fear,
Sorrow, or joy? won't beauty go with these?
Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,
Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,
And then add soul and heighten them threefold?
Or say there's beauty with no soul at all—
(I never saw it—put the case the same—)
If you get simple beauty and nought else,
You get about the best thing God invents:
That's somewhat; and you'll find the soul you have missed,
Within yourself, when you return Him thanks.
"Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my life, in short,
And so the thing has gone on ever since.

Fra Lippo Lippi was one of the lesser heroes of the Renaissance. Dante, Leonardo da Vinci I should put in the chief places among its leaders. Dante was sponsor for the birth of a new European literature. The Middle Ages had produced nothing but a few Latin poems, mostly of a religious character. Dante, without breaking away from the religious tradition, mingled with it the classic and infused both with a new genius inspired by a sense of Italian nationalism. Leonardo da Vinci, whose ardent and inquisitive mind ranged over the whole field of human knowledge, and sought expression at one extreme in the painting of pictures, at another in the designing of flying machines, was perhaps even

greater than Dante in the fulness of his conception of the new message of light to the world.

A characteristic product of the Renaissance was Machiavelli, a much-abused genius whose *Prince* is not at all the cynic exposure of an evil mind, but a calm, dispassionate analysis of the "political" ethic. One hears much denunciation of *The Prince*, mostly from people who have never read it, but still fails to find a political system which adopts any higher code of ethics than that of *The Prince*, especially when questions of foreign relations arise. Machiavelli's subtle mind saw clearly the motives of political action, and the Renaissance spirit enabled him to state frankly what he saw. Such candour is not possible now. Statesmen follow the methods which have come to be known as "Machiavellian"; but they always profess motives of justice and of honour. In which comforting, but quite untrue professions they are following, of course, with fidelity the methods of Master Machiavelli.

In matters of social life, too, the Renaissance was a period of awakening and of the re-birth of high ideals. Civilisation depends a very great deal, I hold, on the power of what may be called "romantic love." Where the love of a

man for a woman and of a woman for a man is highly regarded and sacredly cherished—that is the greatest incentive of all to great thinking and noble striving. Indeed, one may well believe that the progress of humanity began when one man began to feel that there was for him on this earth one woman only with whom he could be happy as a mate. Whilst any mate would content him, there was little urging to effort. But when there was but the one—well, he was ready to risk rashly his life on a log to cross a stream to get her, and thus learned boat-building. And so through all the crafts and arts of life.

The Renaissance was a time of great lovers and of great idealisation of love. Dante was urged to his immortal work by the thought of Beatrice; Petrarch by his Laura; perhaps Da Vinci by his Monna Lisa. Even the light Boccaccio had his ideal love for Fiametta. Rossetti has rescued for English readers from one of the lesser poets of the Renaissance this exquisite love-letter:

> For lo! thy law is passed
> That this my love should manifestly be
> To serve and honour thee:
> And so I do: and my delight is full,
> Accepted for the servant of thy rule.

Without almost, I am all rapturous,
Since thus my will was set
To serve, thou flower of joy, thine excellence:
Nor ever seems it anything could rouse
A pain or a regret.

But on thee dwells my every thought and sense:
Considering that from thee all virtues spread
As from a fountain-head
That in thy gift is wisdom's best avail,
And honour without fail
With whom each sovereign good dwells separate,
Fulfilling the perfection of thy state.

Lady, since I conceived
Thy pleasurable aspect in my heart,
My life has been apart
In shining brightness and the place of truth:
Which till that time, good sooth,
Groped among shadows in a darken'd place,
Where many hours and days
It hardly ever had remember'd good.
But now my servitude
Is thine, and I am full of joy and rest.
A man from a wild beast
Thou madest me, since for thy love I lived.

It was in that spirit the Italian Renaissance loved and lived. It would be impossible, within the space of one brief chapter, even to catalogue the great names of the Italian Renaissance. And the period has an explanatory literature of its own so vast as to cover in detail every phase

of the great literary and artistic revival of European civilisation. This book, intended to give to the traveller hints on the chief points of interest of the Italy of to-day, may not dare therefore to trespass on that field. Let it just be added that the cities of Italy which are most closely associated with the Renaissance and its great workers are Rome and Florence. Having glanced at Classical Italy and Renaissance Italy, we can turn now to Twentieth Century Italy, enabled, perhaps, by a little knowledge of the early influences once at work in Italy to understand better the conditions of to-day.

A VALLEY IN PIEDMONT

CHAPTER IV

THE ITALY OF TO-DAY

THE world won more from the Italian Renaissance than did Italy herself. The great geniuses of that period, some gentle and gracious, others wild and stormy, failed to revive the Italian nation, though they created an Italian literature, an Italian school of Art, and an Italian philosophy. The beacon-fire lit by Italians illumined the whole world, but Italy continued to be covered, as with a "crazy-work" quilt, by a collection of petty states, mutually jealous, often warring among themselves, seldom reluctant to call in the aid of powerful foreign neighbours to secure some petty local advantage at the price of the further enslavement of Italy. The little States of Italy certainly were competent to work marvels in fighting by land and sea, as the proud records of Venice, of Genoa, of Pisa, of Florence will show.

But for centuries no statesman or captain was great enough to restore Italy to a place among the nations, patriot enough to refuse to call in a foreigner to aid him against rival Italians.

Not until the nineteenth century did there come into being the Third Italy, the Italy of to-day, which strives with an almost feverish pride to live up to the memory of the ancient glories of the land.

Cavour, who is ranked by some historians with William the Silent and with George Washington, was the statesman chiefly responsible for the Italian *Risorgimento*. Of Cavour Mr. William Roscoe Thayer gives a clear picture in his recent *The Life and Times of Cavour*:

> Cavour's genius was positive, but it was none the less capable of powerful emotions and unquenchable enthusiasms. He, too, came under the spell of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the magician who, having fired the generation of 1789, was inspiring the Romanticists of 1830. "From the time when I read Rousseau's books for myself," he writes to Uncle Sellon in 1833, "I have felt the liveliest admiration for him. He is, to my thinking, the man who has striven most to uplift the dignity of the past centuries. His eloquent voice more than anything else contributed to fix me in the path of progress and of social emancipation. *Emile*, above

all, has always pleased me by the justness of its ideas and the force of its logic."

Whatever the lion eats, turns to lion. Two men more unlike than Cavour and Rousseau in their practical efficiency and in their moral sense it would be hard to name; and yet Cavour drew the best from Rousseau and converted it into force for doing his own work, just as he took their best from Bentham and Adam Smith.

It was Cavour who, as chief minister of the little State of Piedmont from 1852 to 1858, gave practical proof of Italian powers of self-government. He built up the economic and moral strength of Piedmont and carefully prepared it as a focus around which all Italy might rally for the expulsion of the Austrians. First an alliance with France, obtained by wonderful diplomatic finesse; then a carefully fostered war between Austria and France; and the first stage of a free Italy was reached, the expulsion of the Austrians. But the task of uniting Italy was then only begun. France had not given her aid with the idea of creating a free and united Italy. After France had been used against the Austrians she had to be got rid of. The enthusiasm inspired by the revolutionaries Garibaldi and Mazzini had to be used, but it had also to

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be kept in check. Yet in six years Cavour's work was completed.

As minister for Piedmont, Cavour's first important step had been the alliance of Piedmont with England and France in 1855, and the sending out of eighteen thousand Piedmontese troops to participate in the Crimean War. The army made an excellent impression upon the English and French allies. General Lord George Paget recorded his impression upon its arrival in the Crimea: "The Piedmontese army was the admiration of all; perfect in every detail." The military reputation of Piedmont, which had suffered from recent defeats at the hands of Austria, was thus redeemed, and closer relations were established with England and France.

That these might be further promoted, Cavour arranged for Victor Emmanuel a visit upon the sovereigns of France and England in 1855, and himself accompanied the King. But Napoleon III. was at that particular moment striving for the friendship of Piedmont's enemy, Austria. In England, on the contrary, Austria was in temporary disfavour, and the royal Piedmontese guest was welcomed with genuine enthusiasm. When the Piedmontese party

stopped again at Paris on their way back to Turin, Napoleon III. evinced a greater desire to please his guests. English cordiality had roused his jealousy.

Cavour was able in time, as we have seen, to enlist French help to drive the Austrians from Piedmont. Then for the next steps he utilised the Italian revolutionary movement. This movement had in 1859 and 1860 been prepared by a widely diffused organisation known as the National Society, and had a general community of sentiment and a clearly defined national aim. Furthermore, it had a noble military leader in Garibaldi, whose patriotism and self-abnegation, both on the battlefield and in exile, had obtained for him confidence in all states of the peninsula. His expedition of The Thousand in 1860 was never surpassed in daring and brilliancy of achievement; it overthrew the tyrannical government of the Two Sicilies, and by liberating nine millions of Italians made the foundation of the kingdom of Italy possible.

Cavour's handling of the forces of revolution was one of the remarkable features of his statesmanship. The revolutionists were encouraged to work for the overthrow of the despotic govern-

ments; but once their work was done, their activity was checked, and their leaders were drawn into the party of law and order under constitutional government. Without exception the States of Italy, as they were freed one by one, declared by overwhelming majorities for union with Piedmont. "The people wants Italy one and indivisible with Victor Emmanuel constitutional King."

On February 18, 1861, Victor Emmanuel opened the first *Italian* Parliament in Turin. It contained deputies from all parts of Italy, though Venice and Rome were still under Austrian and Papal rule. (Venice came into the Italian kingdom in 1866, after the war by Prussia and Italy against Austria. Rome was occupied after its evacuation by the French troops during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870.)

Cavour did not long survive the triumph of his life-work. His death was a very serious loss to the young Italian nation. Almost at once it was followed by disorders. In 1860, with Italy under the guidance of Cavour, the heroic Garibaldi by the Expedition of The Thousand had freed the Sicilies from tyranny. In 1862, with Cavour dead, the same Garibaldi was led to

smirch his fame with the wild expedition of Aspromonte. At that time Venice and Rome were still under foreign dominion, and Garibaldi, living since his heroic exploit of 1860 like another Cincinnatus on his farm at Caprera, agitated always for an effort to unite them to Italy. In the spring of 1862 he planned a raid against Austria, and found his plans thwarted by the Italian government. Garibaldi made his way then to Palermo (Sicily) and organised there an expedition which was to free Rome from the Papal dominion.

On the night of August 24 Garibaldi, with two thousand of his men, crossed the Straits from Sicily in the steamers *General Abbattucci* and *Dispaccio*. They found Reggio on the mainland occupied by the Italian troops and the population apathetic, and retired into the forests of Aspromonte by the same precipitous tracks up which the men of The Thousand, drunk with victory, had helped one another by their muskets. For four days the little force, hungry and exhausted, toiled over the hills, until on August 29 they came into touch with a force of *bersaglieri* under Colonel Pallavicini. Garibaldi ordered his men not to shoot, but a volley was exchanged, and a bullet struck

Garibaldi in the heel as he walked along the line and brought him to the ground. Colonel Pallavicini, with head uncovered, received Garibaldi's sword, and the wounded leader was next day carried to the shore and placed on board ship for Spezzia. For a while the chief military hero of the wars of Italian independence remained in an Italian gaol wounded by an Italian bullet. He was soon released, but the incident was an inglorious anti-climax to the movement of liberation. It was directly due to the poor quality of the political leaders who succeeded Cavour. Italy for many years after was to suffer severely at the hands of her politicians.

The troubles of the new nation were many. She was poor in economic resources. Yet she had to maintain a great army and a great navy. In time she was tempted to colonial enterprises, and learned in the war with Abyssinia how bitter a price may be paid for Empire. It was the war in Africa which brought the fall of Crispi, a man who had shown the best degree of political talent since Cavour's death. There followed the grave crisis of 1898, when it seemed as though the new Italian nation were doomed to dissolution by revolution. But the storm was fought

SOUTH DOORWAY OF CATHEDRAL, PALERMO

through, and since then there has been a steady improvement in Italy's condition. The national finances have been reorganised, education improved, agriculture aided with cheap money and facilities for skilled training, the railways nationalised, the growth of industries encouraged.

Unfortunately greater material prosperity has had to be paid for in Italy sometimes at the expense of the picturesque. The utilisation of the waterfalls for the generation of electrical power has been one of the chief features of industrial progress in Italy. The Italian slopes of the Alps are to-day scarred with generating stations, and several noble waterfalls have been ruined for the sake of "power." A recent traveller in Italy (1912) complained sadly of this scientific vandalism:

> Who that has mounted the Splügen from the Swiss side of the watershed, and, having lingered over the Dantesque beauty of the Via Mala, has crossed the summit, on his way down the Italian slope, can have failed to admire the Madesimo cascade, with its sheer drop of some 150 feet, radiant with iridescent hues as it waves in the mountain breeze, like the "wind-blown thread" of Matthew Arnold, or descending with a solid plunge, like Ruskin's "stoop of the golden eagle," or Professor Aytoun's "fall of the meteor-stone"? Countless wayfarers have, for generations, been impressed by the

glories of the "Cascata di Groppera" (to give it its local name), and now I learn by telegram that, but thirty-six hours ago, the waterfall has ceased to play, "turned into a profound cavity within the mountain," to the grief of all lovers of the picturesque, nay, from the financial point of view, to the loss of yet another of Italy's assets —the perennial attraction it had for the tourist and the stranger within her gates.

The incident is but another of the kind which for years past has been in evidence all over Italy, and which threatens not only

> The green steeps whence Anio leaps
> In floods of snow-white foam,

but even some of her historic lakes, like that of Thrasymene, witness, as it was, of the tremendous defeat of the Consul Flaminius by Hannibal, a fight so furiously contested that, according to Livy, an earthquake, occurring during its progress and engulfing towns and deflecting streams by its violence, was quite unperceived by the combatants. Long may it be before that legendary sheet of water, with its similarly menaced sister, the Lago di Bolsena, Macaulay's

> Dark Volsinian mere,

encounters the fate of Lake Fucino, formerly the "apple of the landscape's eye," and a source of livelihood to the local fishermen, now converted, at the cost of £1,400,000, by Prince Torlonia, into a fever-haunted morass! As to the Anio, the grand fall which was turned by flood and landslip into a "rapid" in 1826, and restored by carrying it through an artificial tunnel higher up stream in 1834—the princely work of Pope Gregory XVI.—is

now, by the deflection of its waters for industrial or municipal ends, reduced to a mere dribble, resembling nothing so much, at a distance, as the track of an uneasy snail.

It will be a tragedy indeed if, to pay for her army and navy and to keep the pace of modern progress, Italy has so to "industrialise" her landscape as to make it harsh and unpleasing. Especially would the lover of the beautiful miss the Italian mountains :

> Oh, those mountains, their infinite movement!
> Still moving with you;
> For, ever some new head and breast of them
> Thrusts into view
> To observe the intruder; you see it
> If quickly you turn
> And, before they escape you surprise them.
> They grudge you should learn
> How the soft plains they look on, lean over
> And love (they pretend)
> —Cower beneath them, the flat sea-pine crouches,
> The wild fruit-trees bend,
> E'en the myrtle-leaves curl, shrink and shut:
> All is silent and grave:
> 'Tis a sensual and timorous beauty,
> How fair! but a slave.

The lakes too; surely there is nothing so useful in the way of generating power that can excuse the murder of an Italian lake! But of course

the Italy of to-day, rejoicing in her new dignity of an "Imperial" power, with much of North Africa that her ancestors wrested from Carthage again under Italian rule, cannot consent to allow herself to be considered as merely a "scenery" country for tourists. If industrial progress demands the marring of mountains and the spoiling of valleys, the harsh work will be done, just as ruthlessly as it has been done in England wherever a coal-pit, an iron-mill, or a railway demanded the sacrifice of a lovely scene.

CHAPTER V

THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

It is one of the sad features of the growth of modern civilisation that all the peoples of the world grow so much alike. It becomes each year more and more difficult to find contrasts by travel. National costumes, local peasant customs and habits rapidly disappear, and the peoples of the most remote countries make it their ideal to imitate as closely as possible the standards set up by Western civilisation, and arrive at a hotch-potch of drabness adapted from Great Britain, America, France, and Germany. They are imitative in dress, in food, and in demeanour. To-day the Chinese peasants and labourers are cutting off their pigtails and adopting the cloth cap of the Lancashire industrials. When they adopt, too, the shoddy tweed suit, and their richer compatriots begin to patronise pseudo-

French cookery, the world's last great stronghold of strangeness will have surrendered, and the traveller in the search of the picturesque among peoples will have to penetrate far into the wilds of Central Africa or voyage to the plateau of Thibet.

In the course of a great deal of travel I have encountered only two places which seemed to be making a stand against the flood of uniformity. Both were in the South Seas: one was Fiji, a British colony which seemed impervious to modernism; the other Honolulu, where American civilisation, in its most blatant and aggressive form, serves only to accentuate, to give an air of added *grotesquerie* to the Hawaiian national life. The ice-cream soda of New York asserts itself; but, side by side, with it is sold dried devil-fish; and the dried devil-fish gives the predominant note. The uniform of American statesmanship —a frock-coat with a slouch hat (worn by American colonists and native dandies alike)— uplifts the standard of modern civilisation in the streets traversed by electric trams; but there show also in those streets languorous Hawaiians garlanded with wreaths of the native flowers; and again the native note predominates. Lately,

during a tour of the Balkan States and of Turkey, I was sadly disappointed to find the citizen of Belgrade and Sofia hanging up his " boxer " hat in restaurants, where he ate just such dishes as the cheaper eating-places of London, New York, or Paris supply; and to discover that the Turk—the fiery Turk of my imagination, with an Arab steed and a Circassian harem—was ordinarily a very commonplace monogamous person in a slop suit, devoted exceedingly to the consumption of lollipops of Scottish manufacture and English tinned meats and biscuits.

It is easy to understand how misconceptions grow about foreign cities and places. We judge those countries which we have not seen mostly by the " news " which the journals print about them; and " news " represents, not the normal of a community, but its eccentricity. The normal is not " news," and is therefore not sent abroad; the departures from the normal, which are " news," the foreigner hears about. Unless, in coming to his judgments, he makes full allowance for the fact that " news " is the extraordinary and not the ordinary life of a community, he is apt to get to some strange conclusions. I have often encountered, for instance, people arriving

in Australia expecting to see big, rough towns, the streets crowded with picturesque diggers and infested with snakes; and to meet on the wharf rough bushmen, who insist, willy-nilly, on putting the stranger to trial by ordeal of buck-jumper. These things are the abnormalities, the picturesque departures from the conventional in life, and they go abroad far in advance of any correct views of the general average of a country's customs. To give another example, in New York you do not at once meet confidence-men with gold bricks for sale at the Central Station; the "grafting" politician is not obvious at first; and you need have no fear of tobacco-juice being discharged on to your garments by the free and independent Yankee, just to show his "gold-darned Republicanism." And in London the West End streets are not paraded by a magnificent nobility giving public expression to their disdain of the "lower classes."

Some untravelled people seriously expect to encounter great national abnormalities when they at last take a voyage abroad to some foreign city. They have been misled by the newspapers, the business of which is to stress the abnormal. "If a dog bites a man," said a famous New York

A TUSCAN VILLA

editor to a "cub" reporter, "that is not news. If a man bites a dog that *is* news." That expresses completely the spirit in which the records of our day are chronicled.

It is quite likely that many people who visit Italy for the first time arrive expecting to encounter at the outset a national life which is partly comic opera, partly wild melodrama; peasants in gay costumes filling the streets with music; Mafiaists and Camorraists lurking in every lane with bloodthirsty stilettoes; picturesquely staged elopements proceeding from secretive-looking villas, and so on, so on. Alas! it is not so. Not to any noticeable extent. Even the banditti are fading out of the national perspective since they put taximeters on the cabs.

If you wish to-day to see the survivals of the peculiar national life of Italy you must go away from the big cities; you must go away from the lakes and the other common haunts of the tourist, where the click of the tourist's camera and the resonant kissings of the German honeymooning couples drown the voice of the lark by day and the nightingale by night; and you must set yourselves to explore the little cities and the villages. There a peasant life persists, and

charming costumes and manners to an extent survive, though quickly passing away. But the big cities of Italy, so far as their populations are concerned, are very much like the other big cities of Europe and America. Fashion, the demands of progress, the spread of industrialism, all help to this result. It is the fashion for women to dress as they do in Paris, men as they do in London. It is a sign of progress to make oneself indistinguishable from the peoples of richer lands. It is the penalty of factories that the factory "hand" becomes like the factory "hand" of other lands, a drab and commonplace figure.

Withal, beneath the surface, even in the cities, the sympathetic observer will trace something of a definite Italian character in the population. The people are certainly more cheerful, more gay in demeanour than those of northern Europe. They do really still find some pleasure in music and in their sunlight. They really are vivid and ardent temperamentally. But what fights against the development and display of the distinctive Italian character is the uneasy, the somewhat resentful pride of this, the "Third Italy." Too many of the leaders

of the people are not content to preach of the glorious past as an incentive to the Italy of to-day to develop *on her own* lines a great future. They set up as standards of imitation rather than as reasons of emulation the more powerful, the richer nations of the North. Italy — they preach — to justify herself, must follow Germany in this, England in that, America in some other thing. It would be better, in my judgment, to let the Italian people develop, more slowly and with less of a Japanese spirit of imitation, their own particular national ideals. As it is the patriotism of a people still poor in material resources is strained to breaking point in the effort to keep the pace with richer rivals, to follow in whose footsteps there is no real necessity; and a charming national character is spoilt by being disguised.

England and America are the most generally favoured and imitated of nations by the Italians. The devotion of the Italian people to the English-speaking world is, I believe, inspired by genuine feelings of gratitude and respect, and not that somewhat snobbish spirit of imitation which governs their attitude to certain other nations. It is, too, a feeling founded on reciprocity. The

English-speaking peoples have always had a most lively appreciation of the services of Italy to civilisation. It has been a common custom of English writers, English artists, to some extent too, English statesmen (I use "English" in the sense of English-speaking and to include American), that they should make Italy a second home. English literature in particular has acknowledged a lively gratitude to Italy.

Once Goldsmith wrote in his "Traveller" this libel on the Italian people :

Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends ;
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride ;
While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between,
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes were found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground ;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives that blossom but to die ;
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign,
Though poor, luxurious, though submissive, vain,
Though grave, yet trifling, zealous, yet untrue;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind.

But that was a long time ago. Since then, without exception almost, the great writers of English have written of Italy and the Italians with affection and admiration. Shelley, the Brownings, Byron, Ruskin, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Leigh Hunt, Landor, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope—these names will occur at once as those of warm friends of the Italian people. And there are scores of others.

The devotion of the Italian people to the English races is real I think. It was shaken a little as regards Great Britain by comments in some of the London papers in reference to the war with Tripoli; for the Italian of to-day is a little uneasy regarding his dignity, somewhat unduly sensitive to criticism. But there was no serious breach caused, and when the shocking allegations as to organised Italian cruelty towards the

Tripolitans were found to have no real foundation in fact and were generally withdrawn, Italy took Great Britain to her bosom with renewed fervour.

I can recall travelling in Italy about that time and being annoyed a little on a train restaurant by a German waiter who had marked me down as "English," and was inclined to be neglectful and rude (there was some soreness between Germany and Great Britain just then). The matter was not so serious as to call for any other penalty than to withhold the customary "tip" when paying, and that little fine I intended to inflict. But an Italian fellow-traveller (whom I did not know) had been watching the course of events with indignation, and at last took things into his own hands. With quite a roar of anger he rose and upbraided that waiter for his pig-like—yes, he said pig-like—rudeness to "an English gentleman travelling in Italy." He threatened to throw him out of the window if he did not amend his ways at once.

Afterwards my Italian champion explained to me that "his blood had boiled" to see an Englishman treated rudely in Italy, and very gracefully he made it clear that as an Italian it

was his duty, and not meant as a trespass on my right to look after my own affairs, to assert the goodwill of his country.

It was a picturesque but rather embarrassing incident. I should have felt more comfortable if I had been allowed to follow my own plan of fining the rude waiter a franc. If there had arisen any real necessity to throw him out of the window on to the plains of Lombardy I daresay that I should have been equal to the task. But it illustrated well the Italian affection for the English peoples and the vivid Italian way of showing a feeling.

You must get accustomed to an atmosphere of hyperbole in Italy. The people resemble some dear Irish humbugs in that they wish to say the thing that will please you at the time, even if it somewhat misinforms you. And they see most things through a magnifying glass. It is the influence of the memory of the classic past that is partly responsible for this exaggeration I think. The Italian is always thinking of the greatness of ancient Rome and trying to bring the facts of new Italy into perspective with those ancient times. As an incentive to patriotism to-day the contemplation of the greatness of

two thousand years ago is admirable. But it can be twisted to inspire a too feverish national egotism. The soundest attitude for the modern Italian people to adopt, it seems to me, would be this: "We have done great things in the past. Once we ruled the whole of the civilised world. Again we revived for the civilised world Letters, Art, and Science. Now we are resolved again to make Italy a great force in the world. But we have no call for feverish haste. What we have done in the past is reason enough to be proudly confident of our future and to be content to wait patiently for that future."

Candidly, the people of Italy to-day suggest often a feeling of pity such as we give to a fine horse struggling up a hill with too great a load. Truly conditions are improving. There is not the old justification to-day for "Mark Twain's" savage gibe to the beggars of Italy "to go and rob their churches." The days of the Bread Riots seem to have passed, never to return. A sound currency, an elastic national revenue, a growing agricultural and industrial prosperity, convince that Italy is on the up-grade. But even so there seems to be too much spent in the cause of pride and power, too little in the

PLOUGHING WITH OXEN IN TUSCANY

cause of happiness. Of a State expenditure of £110,000,000 in 1910–11, less than one million went in elementary education. (Of course that was supplemented by communal rates so that the total expenditure on elementary education was some £6,000,000.) I am one of those unfortunate people who do not see, in the teaching of people to read and write, the "open sesame" to happiness, and would be quite content to think of the Italian peasantry (and many another peasantry) excluded for generations from the "education" that has as its chief end, seemingly, the ability to read newspapers. But that is an old-fashioned view and hopelessly untenable in these days, when the expenditure on elementary education is the one acknowledged test of a nation's consideration for the happiness of its citizens. Judged by that test Italy does not do her duty to her people.

Other tests of national happiness are the standards of living and of public health. Neither is high enough in Italy, though both are improving. The *lazzaroni* of the south, the inadequately-fed peasants of the north, still remain as symptoms of national *malaise*. Such, too, are the lotteries encouraged by the State. It is a

sign of comfort and industry to save; of penury and of idleness to gamble. Italy has few Savings Banks and many lotteries.

That is the dark side of the Italian social picture. The brighter side shows the people facing cheerfully extraordinarily heavy burdens of taxation; managing to live with great economy on their little farms; taking pleasure in very simple food; and following in their homes a suave and kindly domestic life. They drink the wine of the country, which is very cheap; live largely on grain foods, fruit, vegetables, and fish, and face the winter cold—it can be cold in Italy—with fortitude, though they can spend very little on fuel. Italian domestic servants are friends of the family, and often spend their whole lives in the same employ. The demands of military service are very great, but they seem to be met with patriotic cheerfulness. Military service begins at twenty, is compulsory for all males, and for three years makes severe exactions. After that liability to service continues for another sixteen years. But during that period little or no demand is made on the conscript's time.

A promising sign of Italian regeneration is the

war that is being waged on the malarial marshes by drainage and by the planting of the Australian eucalyptus tree. At first there was a strong prejudice against reclamation work by the peasantry. In the Piano di Spagna, for example, the land was wonderfully fertile, but miasmic. Every effort of the larger land proprietors to drain the soil and diminish the severity of the miasmic vapours rising at certain seasons was strongly opposed for a time by the small holders and labourers whose lives were being sacrificed in working the land. These peasants thought that the rich hay crops and the fat pasturage for cattle would be ruined by drainage, and preferred to suffer from the fever than to spoil the land, as they thought. But in time wisdom prevailed, and that territory is now both richer and more healthy. In this district, where from 1840 to 1859 the vital statistics showed that malaria kept the average term of life down to less than twenty years, the conditions have now been made reasonably healthy.

Recent official figures show that now of the total area of Italy, 70,793,000 acres, only 10 per cent are uncultivated. The productive area is 71 per cent of the total, and the unproductive 19 per

cent, but this includes the land occupied by lagoons and marshes which, in a great measure, is open to agricultural improvement by drainage.

The cultivated area is divided into five agrarian zones. The first zone is that of the "agrumi" (oranges, lemons, and similar fruits). It takes in a great part of Sicily, extends along the southern and western coasts of Sardinia, along the Ligurian Riviera from Bordighera to Spezia and on the Adriatic, near San Benedetto del Tranto and Gargano, and in some regions of Calabria, and terminates around the gulfs of Salerno, Sorrento, and Naples. The region of "olives" comprises the Sicilian valleys and part of the mountain slopes; the valleys near the coasts of Sardinia; and on the mainland it extends from Liguria and from the southern extremities of Romagna down to Apulia and to Calabria. There are also districts of the olive region near the lakes of upper Italy and in Venetia. The "wine" area begins on the sunny slopes of the Alpine spurs and in the Alpine valleys open toward the south, and it extends over the plains of Lombardy and Emilia. It covers the mountain slopes in Sardinia and in Sicily, the Calabrian Alps and the

whole length of the Apennines, and the hills of Tuscany and Montferrato in Piedmont. The region of "chestnuts" extends from the valleys to the highest plateaus of the Alps, along the northern slopes of the Apennines in Liguria, Modena, Tuscany, Romagna, Umbria, and the Marches, and along the southern Apennines to the Calabrian and Sicilian ranges, as well as to the mountains of Sardinia. The "wooded" region covers the Alps and the Apennines above the chestnut level.

Those are the "tree" zones and illustrate the variety of the climate. There is a wide range of cereal cultivation—wheat, maize, rice, rye, barley, oats, and millet being cultivated in different parts of the peninsula. Potatoes, beets, and turnips, and various legumes, which form a great proportion of the food of the people, occupy many acres. Then 30 per cent of the land is devoted to pasture, and great areas to tobacco, hemp, flax, cotton, olives, citron fruits, nuts, mulberry trees (for silkworms), and of course vines. The Italian people produce about 1,000,000,000 gallons of wine a year, mostly Chianti for home consumption, but a good deal for the export trade. Cheese-making, horse-

breeding, the pasturage of sheep, goats, and swine are other great agricultural industries.

Of late the Italian Federation of Agrarian Unions has greatly contributed to agricultural progress. Government travelling teachers of agriculture, and schools of viticulture, are also doing good work. Machinery is coming into use for better cultivation, £1,000,000's worth being imported on an average every year. The income from land is generally steady, and will increase owing to the encouragement given by the State, especially in connection with irrigation, drainage of low-lying land, river regulation, and various *Crédit Foncier* laws.

In most places the mode of agriculture is still very primitive, and for that reason very picturesque. The wooden plough and the plough team of oxen may still be seen in many districts, though American and other agricultural machinery gradually invade the land, more useful and more profitable, but less pleasing to the eye. Occasionally a district keeps its old-time atmosphere even as regards its town. Siena, for example, planted firmly on its rock, comes straight out of the Middle Ages. Almost every house is convertible to a fortress at will. The ancient

walls still lift their ramparts, within which the houses climb upwards, grouping closely round the cathedral. Old customs there never die and change never comes. White oxen walk the streets dragging after them wicker carts shaped like Roman chariots. The people till their farms and carry on their little businesses just as they might have done under the Roman Republic. Other attractive small towns with something of the old atmosphere still are Caserta, Arezzo, Lucca, Montepulciana, and Ancona.

The teaching of modern agriculture goes on apace in most districts, however, and the "scientific farmer" is taking the place of the peasant who followed the methods of his forefathers. The change is mostly for the good. In one indirect respect it is of advantage in putting an end to one of the scandals which visitors to Northern Italy have often deplored as a stain on the national character—the cruel destruction of bird-life. A custom, suggested by poverty probably in the first instance, had grown up among the Italian peasants at the foot of the Alps to trap in nets and destroy for the larder all kinds of small birds as they passed on their seasonal migrations. The destruction of

bird-life was grave. It had no apology in the amount of food that the bodies of the little songsters afforded. Now the agricultural teachers are pointing out that this wholesale destruction of birds is chiefly responsible for the ravages of insect pests in Italy. The peasant kills and eats the bird, who therefore is not able to kill and eat the insects; and the insects, unchecked, destroy the crops. All the argument of self-interest as well as of sentiment is in favour of stopping the cruel war on bird life; and that is beginning to be recognised.

Education, however, both agricultural and general, has a hard task to combat the superstitions which have a great influence still on the national life of Italy. Silkworms, for instance, do not call for this or that scientific precaution. But it is strictly necessary that any one entering a house where silkworms are should invoke a blessing: "Il Signore ve lo benedica." And the eggs of the silkworms must be taken to church on Palm Sunday to hear the "Passion" read. The women carry the eggs in their pockets, and they are not blessed openly. But if not taken to church on that day they produce either bad caterpillars or silk of inferior quality. Also

IN THE OLIVE REGION

new wine must be tasted on St. Martin's Eve or else next year's grapes will not yield good wine.

The silk industry is in its yield one of the most important of modern Italy. It represents one-third of the total exports of the country, having increased from a value of £12,381,840 recently to a value of £23,000,000 in 1912. Not all of this, however, represents home-grown silk. Raw silk to the value of about £4,000,000 a year is imported from China, Japan, and France to be made up by the Italian people. The cotton goods largely exported from Italy are made up chiefly of imported raw material, though a little cotton is grown by the Italian people.

In fact, a resolute effort is being made to graft upon the agricultural people of Italy a highly-organised industrial life, raw materials being imported for the factories, and markets sought abroad for the finished products. At present the growth of this industrial life is hampered by the lack of a local supply of coal (coal to the value of £10,000,000 a year has to be imported). But the development of " white coal " power, *i.e.* of electrical power, generated by waterfalls, is rapidly making Italy independent

of coal, and will assist enormously her industrial development.

So the Italian people of to-morrow, or the day after, may have developed into a people of factory workers rather than agriculturists, their beautiful mountain torrents and lakes given up to utility and sacrificed as natural joys for the sake of power. It is a development which many will look to with sorrow. But it seems to be the way of the world. Progress demands that we should give up being happy in order to be busy, give up beauty for utility, and barter a rye crust and cheese under the rainbow of a waterfall for canned beef and white bread in the shed of a factory. And who would dare to say a word against Progress ?

CHAPTER VI

ROME

THE human mind attempting to grasp the significance to the world of Rome is baffled. It was a robber keep on the banks of the Tiber, one among the thousands that existed in Europe at the time when a road, a waterway, or the nearness of a fertile valley gave to resolute men good hope of plunder. By the sheer stubbornness of its people this robber keep became a great city. That city then imposed her will on the surrounding States one by one, and in time absorbed all Italy. Then she set herself to the conquest of the whole world, and her conquering legionaries penetrated to Persia, and Nubia, and Morocco, to the Lowlands of Scotland, to the banks of the Meuse, and to the Carpathian Mountains. The strong nations of Italy, the Punic Empire, the Gauls, the Spaniards, the Britons, the Celts, the

Greeks, the Persians, were all subdued. The civilisations of Palestine, of Egypt, of Greece were absorbed, were then codified and imposed on the world in a practical Romanised form, which is the basis of all modern civilisation.

But with that greatness Rome was not content. Her material Empire was in time destroyed by internecine feuds giving passage to the inroads of the outer barbarians. Then on the ruins of that Empire Rome began to build up another, a spiritual, or rather a religious, Empire, wider in dominion, more imperious in demand than the power of the Caesars. The Church of Rome in time claimed spiritual and temporal dominion over the whole Christian world. It gave to one nation all America, to one other the Indies. It set up kings and pulled them down. It brought emperors barefoot and abject to its throne and kept them suppliant in its ante-rooms.

That religious Empire, too, was doomed to pass away. It sought a conquest over human thought, and such an ambition had in its heart the seed of failure. But what a monstrous crop of greatness for one city, for the inhabitants of a little patch of earth around which one may easily walk in a day! What wondrous store

of memories those two great Empires have left!

In each case the Roman Empire, the first one political and military, the second one religious, had as the explanation of its greatness of achievement—so far as the human mind can explore phenomena so much out of the ordinary—a robust, stubborn, practical common-sense in method. The Empire of the Caesars was founded on the principle of seizing and adapting to workaday use the best thought, and the best methods of other nations, and turning against them their own weapons thus improved. The Empire of the Popes had its explanation—so far as explanation can be found—in the Roman organisation of religion on a political basis. The Roman mind, at once acute and practical, saw in the new creed of Christianity, which in the hands of the clumsy was becoming an instrument of social revolution and disorder, a means of reorganising the shattered civilisation of the day. The masses, left leaderless as a result of the wars with the barbarians, were to be enrolled as obedient and patriotic citizens under a new polity, which promised them great rewards in the Hereafter for faithful service to constituted

authority in this world. The barbarians themselves were drawn to a system which appealed at once to their poetry, to their superstition, and to their human needs; were drawn to it and through it to civilisation. Christianity in the hands of the African Christians would have become a creed of horror and destruction. In the hands of the Byzantine Christians it would have lost itself in a morass of idle speculations. Roman genius made it practical, human, political, and the Roman Church—in spite of all that may be charged against it—fulfilled a great work for civilisation during those early centuries of the Christian era.

Rome's spiritual dominance of the European world came to an end as had Rome's material dominance. In neither case is that properly to be taken as a proof of an inherent unsoundness. Both did their work, and having done it passed away, for in human institutions nothing is eternal.

The pilgrim comes to Rome, then, from all parts of the earth as to the mother city of civilisation, and having come may not fail to find in every direction some storied stone, some hallowed plot of earth at which the mind prompts a genuflection.

With all its monuments and ruins, the natural beauty of Rome and its Campagna is apt to be overlooked altogether. If it is possible to come to a consideration of Rome in any way not altogether hackneyed, it will be by glancing at the scenic charm of the great city first. Horace, the most faithful to Rome of all her writers, in the ode *Laudabunt alii*, gives the city and its environs the palm for grace over all the world:

> Some sing of Mitylene and bright Rhodes,
> Of Ephesus and Corinth with the sea
> On either side: to Thebes and Delphos odes
> Indite: and Tempe of fair Thessaly.
> To some, a single task, the citadel
> Of virgin Pallas in perpetual lays
> To celebrate (thence olive culled doth well
> Adorn their brows). In Juno's praise,
> Some Argos rich in steeds, Mycenae's gold
> Describe. To me not Spartan temperance
> Of clime nor Larissan fields have e'er told
> As much as Tivoli's resounding dance
> Of waters, headlong Anio, and the grove
> Of Tiber with its orchards and sweet rills
> As the soft south wind dissipates above
> The clouds, and the continuous down-pour stills.

It is impossible to put the music of Horace into English. But perhaps that translation will turn the reader to the original:

Me nec tam patiens Lacedaemon
Nec tam Larissae percussit campus opimae
Quam domus Albuneae resonantis
Et praeceps Anio ac Tiburni lucus et uda
Mobilibus pomaria rivis.

Horace may have flattered his patrons unduly, insincerely. But his feeling for the natural beauty of the Roman landscape was genuine, and it is justified by the facts. Rome, apart from all her monuments, is a beautifully situated city, as one must recognise looking out on the vast pleasure park of the Campagna.

Not so wholesome as beautiful that Campagna, we must sadly admit. There are, it is said, one hundred and twenty-five different kinds of mosquitoes in Italy, and they all know the road to Rome and take their pleasure in the Campagna. But in my experience the Italian mosquito is more usually vocal and annoying than actually blood-sucking and dangerous. That is, however, an Australian and perhaps a too-favourable view. In some parts of Australia the mosquitoes are never considered to be really bad unless they are able to pull you off your bed. The Hexham Greys, for example, are a famous corps of mosquitoes—big, mottled-grey fellows with voices like

ST. PETER'S, ROME

trumpets and probosces like cavalry sabres. If the Hexham Greys could be disciplined and trained they would do much towards solving the problem of the defence of the country.

But—*Quo, Musa, tendis?* It is the sight of the Australian eucalyptus trees growing in the Roman Campagna and sweetening its air and soil that has carried me away to Australia, from one of the oldest to the very newest of civilisations. These eucalyptus plantations are signs of the care of New Italy for the public health, and are doing much to regenerate malarial districts. Their vogue in Italy was curiously illustrated to me the other day when in a French provincial town I wandered into a cinematograph theatre, and saw there an Italian film illustrating Julius Caesar's life, and lo, the film showed the battle of Philippi being fought in a grove of eucalyptus trees!

Having noted the natural beauty of Rome crowning her Seven Hills in the midst of a noble plain, we may turn to the memorials of Rome's greatness and—taking as said, or written, the usual dithyrambics—try to get to some coherent idea of the Roman character as shown in Roman buildings. I think that as regards the remains

of ancient Rome there will be little question that they support the conception of the Roman as an intensely practical, straightforwardly resolute person, knowing what he wanted, and seeking to arrive at his end by the shortest road that he could march by with dignity. (He was not willing to scramble or to crawl. He needs must go forward with state, knowing the value of pomp and ceremony to impress, not alone the foreign, but the domestic mind.) His buildings lacked the exquisite elegance of the best Greek architecture. The sculpture with which he decorated them was poor in comparison with the standard of the Parthenon. But there is a grandeur of simplicity and of honest straightforward devotion to an ascertained purpose about his buildings. Perhaps the Roman road and the Roman aqueduct are the two best monuments of the Roman builder. His temples and his houses are just illustrations of the same methods applied to other ends.

It is held by some writers on Art that Rome "vulgarised" the Grecian spirit. To an extent the accusation, if it is an accusation, is true. But it may be accepted as a praise, not a blame. Greek Art might have perished off the face of

the earth if it had not been for the Roman translation of it into terms of more immediate human usefulness.

The close devotion of the Roman to the things of this earth is shown in every trace that is left of his old life. He was very fond of this world, and wished to make it as desirable a place as possible, as comfortable a place as possible. He went across the globe with iron-shod heels, insisting on making other peoples civilised and comfortable after his standard, and incidentally borrowing from them anything that seemed useful—an idea, a god, a new method of building. It was one of the most perplexing circumstances of his experience when he encountered the Christian faith, and discovered that the Christian theology was not willing to take a place in his Pantheon, or share with Jupiter and Isis the responsibility of keeping the Roman world contented and orderly.

The Roman citizen had to yield a very implicit obedience to the Roman State. But having fulfilled that duty he was left room to cultivate a very generous egotism. The Roman language reflects the self-importance of the Roman individual. The Roman foreign policy, with the

solemn significance it attached to the declaration *Civis Romanus sum*, shows again the practical Roman mind. The Greek dubbed the non-Greek "a barbarian" and left it at that, content enough in his later days to be the subject of the barbarian, and taking refuge in that "intellectual contempt" which is the most futile of all mental attitudes. The Roman made his citizenship a privilege of great practical value, and enforced respect for it whilst any strength was left to his arm in every and any corner of the earth.

The Roman temples have neither the charm of supreme art nor the spiritual significance of a genuine religious fervour. But they have a grandeur of their own, very correct, very massive, employing the best hired skill that was available to express the dignity of a Roman god, who was something slightly superior in rank to a Roman citizen.

It is curious to see how this Roman spirit was carried down to the time when Christian temples came to be built. I do not think that there is a single humble, reverent, or mystical Christian church in all Rome. There may be, because great is the multitude of Roman churches, and some of the less notable ones unknown to me

perhaps reflect the Christian spirit without any touch of the pride, the domineering mind, the practical ambition of Rome.

Let me cite St. Peter's as an example of the characteristic Roman church. There is nothing mystical about St. Peter's, nothing humble, nothing really spiritual. It is a vast monument to God, built in some spirit of worship, no doubt, but also in a spirit of pride and human assertiveness. It lifts up its great dome to the sky, not as a suppliant, but as an ally. The Church Militant salutes the Church Triumphant.

St. Peter's dominates the perspective of Rome from every quarter, a spectacular monument of the temporal Empire of the Popes. It is of impressive hugeness. To walk across its floor is to take a long journey. Voices chanting in a side chapel are barely audible from the opposite aisle of the church. An English village church would occupy just the space taken by the four piers supporting the arrogant dome of this temple. Necessarily, to be in proportion with the rest of the building the decorations are exaggerated. Hardly a detail bears close examination or gives a separate pleasant sensation. The few fine works of art and beauty are lost in

a maze of little chapels, where they hide away quietly, dumb critics of the clamant architectural greatness around. St. Peter's, in short, with its enormous size, strength, and cost, with its proclamation of enduring power, is finely typical of the ecclesiastical Empire to which Rome aspired.

To-day St. Peter's seems to enter little into the life of the Italian people. Its gorgeous services attract the tourists rather than the citizens of Rome, though occasionally it may stir the heart when its doors open to a crowd of simple peasants from a distance, coming as pilgrims to kiss the statue of St. Peter.

To go back for a while to the remains of classical Rome. The chief of these are the Forum, about which one may not write adequately without telling the history of the world; the Vespasian Temple, the Temple of Caesar, of Venus, of Concord, of Castor and Pollux; the Arches of Settimius Severo, of Titus and of Constantine, and the still imposing Colosseum, the Pantheon, the Stadium; the Palatine Hill, with the vast buildings of the Caesars and the Temple of Settimius, of the Magna Mater, the Stadium, the Trajan Forum, the Forum and Mausoleum of

Augustus; the Column of Marcus Aurelius and his heroic statues, the Sepulchre of Publicius, the Tabularium, the Forum of Nerva, the Temple of Minerva, the Diocletian Baths, the Caracalla Baths, the Marcellian Baths, the Auditorium of Mecenate, the Temple of Vesta, the Temple of Virile Fortune, and the Pyramid of Caius Cestius. In all these there is the same note of an impressive simplicity and a practical ambition. As the severe tradition of the Roman Republic merges into the more luxurious tradition of the Roman Empire there is a greater pomp and dignity, but never a sign of frivolousness, and never a sign of spiritual longing or of doubt.

When the Renaissance came to Italy its organisation—if one may use such a word for so seemingly spontaneous a resurrection of intellectual life—came from Rome, but few of its fine flowers of painting or sculpture were devoted to the adornment of that city. But naturally Michelangelo, with his vast pompous genius, was devoted to Rome, and for the student of his work and that of Raphael a visit to Rome is necessary. The Vatican and various Roman churches have their chief works.

The Vatican has had its claim accepted to be

" the greatest building of the world." Certainly it is the greatest and most precious museum. The Popes live here as " prisoners." The surviving claim of the Roman Curia to temporal dominion over the old Papal State makes it a necessary part of their policy to treat the Italian government as in hostile occupation of the city of Rome, and as a besieging force around the Vatican. The imprisonment is a fiction. The Popes are free to come and go as they please, and are offered a friendly subsidy by the Italian government. But to accept the dominion of United Italy over Roman territory is to abandon for ever and irrevocably that " temporal power " which was once stretched to mean that all sovereigns held their thrones as fiefs of the Supreme Pontiff, and that the newly discovered lands of the globe were in his gift. The " temporal power " has vanished in fact, as every one knows, but the Roman Church is reluctant to make formal admission of its disappearance. At one time the hostility of the Popes to the kings of Italy was so great that Roman Catholic citizens of Italy were urged not to yield full obedience to the central government, and were not supposed to participate in Italian

ARCH OF TITUS, ROME

elections. That *intransigeant* spirit is now passing away, and gradually there is an approach to a reconciliation between the Quirinal representing the national government, and the Vatican representing the Roman Catholic Church. It is a bold thing to prophesy in regard to a Church which prides itself on its unchangeableness, but one may safely conclude that some day a Pope with sufficient courage will terminate the quarrel —a step which would be much to the advantage of Italy and of the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore to civilisation generally, for, though it has had to give up the dream of a spiritual Empire over the whole world, the Roman Church is still the most powerful of Christian bodies.

In this splendid "prison-house" of the Vatican are stored so many treasures of art that one could not even catalogue them in a single volume. The Sistine Chapel, the Loggia, and the Raphael halls are the most notable features of the Vatican. After the Vatican, the Quirinal, the host of churches raising their beautiful lines at almost every corner, and some of the typical palaces (those of Farnese, Venezia, and Doria for examples) should be seen. Modern Italy has, too, some great monuments at Rome, though none are

of particular art worth. They illustrate most clearly the ambition of the " Third Italy " to vie with the grandeur of the past. There are many museums (though the churches and palaces are the chief repositories of great pictures and sculptures), among which the Museo Capitolino is perhaps the most interesting. The Palace of Fine Arts is devoted to the work of modern artists, and contains nothing to suggest that the Old Masters will be surpassed. Modern Italian Art has not yet shown true greatness and it has not humility.

The Roman population is not representative of the best of Italy's new life. The old aristocracy, bitterly poor for the most part, have hitherto held aloof to a great extent from participation in the work of regenerated Italy. The poorer classes have not as yet been given good opportunities of prosperous industry, and their self-respect is being attacked constantly by the temptations in the shape of tips and alms offered by the hordes of visitors who come to gaze upon Rome. " The city is inhabited by priests, politicians, beggars, and tourists," said one bitter critic of Rome. Things are not as bad as that. But Rome so far as her population is concerned is not yet worthy of Italy.

COLUMN OF MARCUS AURELIUS, ROME

A tradition of the Roman aristocracy—of the Church and of the State alike—is that it is vulgar to walk. Indeed, a prince of the Roman Church must not walk in the public streets, and this tradition is carried beyond Italy, and is imposed upon the cardinals of the Roman Church in all lands. One may hear many pitiful legends of impoverished Roman aristocrats half-starving themselves so that they may keep up the dignity of a carriage.

Yet, with all her poverty and all her beggars, Rome is happy enough so long as the sun shines, and the streets are then filled with cheerful people. When rain and cold winds come the Roman gets to his house, and there, fireless and comfortless, shivers through the days until the sun comes back to the heavens. Rome in the days of the sirocco is a sad place for the poor. The modern hotels for the tourists are, of course, well enough provided against cold spells.

The Roman people are handsome and very much of a type. There is no great distinction between classes. All, down to the beggars, have an air of distinction, a consciousness of belonging to a city which has been twice mistress of the world.

Leaving Rome and exploring the villas around, these are found little less interesting than the city herself. The Villa Borghese is one of the most notable of Roman aristocratic houses. Its grounds contain the Temple of the Bramante and the Casino with a great collection of pictures, sculptures, and bronzes. From the beautiful public garden of the Pincio there is a splendid view of Rome. The Villa Doria Pamphili, the Villa Medici, the Villa Albani, the Villa Bonaparte, the Villa Mattei, are all beautiful in themselves, in their gardens, and in their art collections.

Coming out on to the Campagna, the splendid lines of the Appian Way—the most famous road in the world—and of the Aqueduct of Claudius will call for attention first. Along the Appian Way are Frascati, a favoured town of the Renaissance; Marino, surrounded by a beautiful chestnut wood; Nemi, at the bottom of whose lake rest the ships of Tiberius; and beautiful Tivoli. Near Tivoli are the ruins of the Temple of the Sibyl and the Temple of Vesta, and the remains of the renowned Villa Adriana, a palace of the Emperor Adrian, who planned to reproduce within its grounds all the greatest art treasures of the day.

CHAPTER VII

FLORENCE

In the midst of a fertile valley of the Apennines, crowning both banks of the Arno, is Florence, a city which belongs to civilisation as well as to Italy, the chief shrine of the Renaissance, the beloved refuge of the world's genius since that day. If but one place in Italy could be visited, certainly it should be this Tuscan city, before even Rome herself. It is the city of Dante, of Da Vinci—whose Monna Lisa was a Florentine woman—of Botticelli, of Lippo Lippi, of Giotto, of Galileo, of the Medici, of Machiavelli, the city, too, most closely associated with St. Francis of Assisi and Savonarola.

All this human interest is shrined in buildings of the noblest beauty, and all is framed in a lovely aspect of Nature—glowing vineyards, purple hills, and far-off snowy mountains.

Senior Novitiate Libra

Florence—the Florentia of the Romans—was doomed to an agonising life during the centuries of barbarian rule. Gradually she emerged from the darkness of those times as a little free city, overlord of most of the province of Tuscany, a dear prize for whatever great monarch was at the time playing with the destinies of Italy, and racked, therefore, by the hand of war again and yet again. From many trials she came out triumphant, the robust patriotism of her citizens saving her from destruction. "Florentine patriotism" came in those struggles to have a special meaning for the world—signifying an exclusive, selfish, and relentless civic pride, which could see nothing but the city, which would have made—had it had the power—Florence another Rome, trampling all the world under foot.

Florentine patriotism had its final expounder in Machiavelli, who set forth with acute insight and with straightforward directness the maxims which should govern the prince of a state. There is nothing extraordinary in holding and applying to the affairs of state the motives of a passionless, conscienceless expediency which Machiavelli stated rather than advocated. But it was an extraordinary, an essentially Florentine, achieve-

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA NOVELLA, WITH THE STROZZI CHAPEL, FLORENCE

By kind permission of Colonel Goff

ment to see them so clearly and set them down so frankly. The condition of Italy at the time was such that against the swords of great Powers a little city anxious for independence had to set, perforce, cunning wits—reinforced now and then by the stiletto. Florence of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance recognised this, and whilst the genius of her citizens was finding expression in the one direction with immortal pictures and carvings and buildings, in another direction it was making famous Florentine statecraft.

The mineral wealth of Tuscany possibly gave Florence her first impulse to greatness. Carrara marble, iron, mercury, borax, copper, salt, and alabaster are all found near the city. But her ultimate source of strength was in the wisdom, the courage, the relentlessness of her citizens.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Florentine greatness began to wax lordly. Cambio, Talenti, Orcagna set to work under great patrons to build her churches and public buildings. Dante was born to give birth to the new Italian literature. Ghiberti, Della Robbia, Donatello, Sandro Botticelli, Fra Angelico, Castogno, Lippo Lippi, Michelangelo began to carve and paint immortal things for their city. Boccaccio—who

is too often ignorantly stigmatised as a mere teller of light immoral tales, whereas he was really a fine writer of romance and a skilful and honest satirist—and Petrarch are lesser names in literature to be credited to Florence at this time. At the head, organising all this genius and setting it to work for the glorification of Florence, were the Medicis. Cosimo Medici, "father of his city," was their founder, and as ruler of Florence made it his ambition to enrich her with noble churches and beautiful palaces and villas. His grandson was that Lorenzo the Magnificent, whose statecraft and noble patronage of the arts made Florence for a time the first city of the world. Clustered around his chair of state were all the great intellects of the time—some Florentine, some pilgrims to Florence, attracted by her greatness. Botticelli, Poliziano, Savonarola, Da Vinci, Cellini, Machiavelli were among the great Florentines of that day.

Lorenzo left no worthy son to rule over Florence, and the city passed from the zenith of her prosperity. But from the Medici family there sprang many great Italian personalities: Giovanni, the second son of Lorenzo, who as Leo X. was one of the greatest Popes of Rome and

COURTYARD OF THE PALAZZO VECCHIO, FLORENCE

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a most powerful patron of the arts; Cosimo I., descendant of a collateral branch of the family who ruled over Florence at a later time and was first Grand Duke of Tuscany. In time the family of the Medici passed away and the headship of Florence was given to Duke Francis of Lorraine, who had married the Arch-Duchess Maria Theresa of Austria. Florence thus brought the Austrians into Italy, for Duke Francis, as consort of his wife, became in time Emperor of Austria, and united Tuscany with the Austrian Empire until the day came when Napoleon I. of France set all the crowns of Europe a-shaking, and liberated Italy from Austrian and other foreign domination of the time to make of her an appanage to France. The fall of Napoleon restored the Lorraine Grand Dukes to Florence, and they remained there until in 1860 the city turned out the foreigner and became a part of united Italy. Rome was then still an independent Papal state, maintained as such by French soldiery, and to Florence fell the honour of becoming capital of the revived kingdom. The honour was great; but greater still was the expense, and Florence was to suffer for many years after because of the desperate efforts she

made to fulfil worthily her duties as capital of Italy.

So much remembered of Florentine history, let us glance at the Florence of to-day, reputed to possess more masterpieces of art than any other city of the world. The visitor should make his way first to the Piazza della Signorina and note the Palazzo Vecchio, the ancient palace of the Republic of Florence. It was built by Arnolfodi Cambio in the thirteenth century to be the chief administrative palace of the city. To-day it is again devoted to the public use as the headquarters of the municipal government of Florence. The Verocchio fountain, the "Perseus" of Cellini, the "Judith" of Donatello, and "the Rape of the Sabines" of John of Bologna are the most notable decorations of the palace.

Cellini has left an interesting picture of how the art-loving citizens of Florence greeted his "Perseus":

> Now, as it pleased God, so soon as the people caught sight of it, there rose a great shout of applause, and this gave my heart some comfort. While I had been putting the finishing touches to the thing, people never stopped pinning up sonnets to the posts of the door, over which hung a curtain. I declare to you that one day, when it was open for several hours, more than twenty sonnets

were stuck up, all of them couched in terms of the very highest praise. After I had covered it again, every day a great number of sonnets were pinned up, and Latin and Greek verses, too; for it was vacation time at the University of Pisa, and all the great distinguished doctors and scholars were each other's rivals in the matter. But what pleased me most, and gave me hope, too, of favour from the Duke, was that the artists, sculptors, and painters vied with each other as to who should say the finest thing about it.

Florence, one may see from that, kept up the old Greek custom of an artist submitting his work to the judgment of the citizens before it was finally set in its place. The custom gives us the good old tag: "Let the shoemaker stick to his last." The statue of a great Greek sculptor having been exposed in the market-place, a cobbler objected that the latch of the shoe was wrong. The sculptor recognised that it was so and corrected the error. The next day the cobbler, emboldened, proceeded to criticise the lines of the face. That enraged the sculptor, who rushed out to beat him and advise him to "stick to his last."

Near by the Palazzo Vecchio is the Church of Or San Michele, destined first for a granary they say, and developing afterwards as the Florentine merchants' special church. The Guild

of Silk Merchants built the walls, and the other ancient Guilds, of furriers, flax merchants, farriers, workers in metals, stockbrokers, armourers, builders, butchers, lawyers, and wool merchants made themselves responsible for the decorations. They had full purses and good knowledge of artists; and splendid was the fame of the men they employed—Donatello, Ghiberti, Verocchio, John of Bologna, Luca della Robbia, Orcogna, Talenti, Hanni di Banco, and others. Close by this church is the little piazetta where the Alighieri lived and Dante was born.

From the Church of Or San Michele the student of the Florence of to-day should pass to the Cathedral Square, the Piazza del Duomo, where are the Cathedral, the Campanile, and the Baptistery. These three are said by some good judges to be the finest group of buildings in the world. The Campanile of Florence—"that serene height of mountain alabaster, coloured like a morning cloud, and chased like a sea-shell," to quote John Ruskin—is a monument of exquisite beauty. It was the work of the fourteenth century, when the pride of Florence was highest. Giotto was responsible for the design, and the decorators were Donatello, Luca

della Robbia, Andrea Pisano, and Francesco Talenti. They worked as with a single genius and a single soul to create a tower which embodies as noble an aspiration of humanity towards the Infinite as Europe knows to-day. The Cathedral near by was the joint work of Arnolfo di Lapo and Bruneschelli; but the façade is of modern work. The doors are beautifully carved. The interior of the church—vast, dim, simple—is most impressive. The Baptistery completes the trinity of beautiful and venerable shrines.

The two "rival" churches of Florence claim attention next. They are the Church of Santa Maria Novella, of which Michelangelo said, "She is as lovely as a bride adorned for her husband," and Santa Croce. Santa Maria Novella was the church of the Dominicans, Santa Croce of the Franciscans.

Three Dominican friars designed Santa Maria Novella in the Italian Gothic style. It was adorned by Giotto, Filippino Lippi, Chirlandaio, Rosellino, Talenti, and other great artists. The famous "Madonna" of this church, attributed for long, with much picturesque legend, to Cimabue, is now thought to be the work of another master. Giovanni Cimabue was a pupil

of the Dominicans of Santa Maria Novella. Tradition tells that this painter, who was Giotto's master, while painting the "Madonna," shut himself into his studio, which stood in a garden near to the old gate of San Piero, and refused to admit any one. Charles of Anjou, brother to Louis XI., King of France, arrived in Florence on his way to take possession of the kingdom of Naples. On his expressing a wish to visit Cimabue's studio, he was permitted to do so, and so great was his admiration for the picture that his enthusiasm caught the people, who insisted on conveying the master's great altar-piece in procession to its appointed place in the Rucellai chapel of Santa Maria Novella. This they did with such expressions of delight, that that quarter of the city was called the "Borgo Allegro." The story is a pretty one, and it is a pity that stern art critics, insisting that this particular "Madonna" is not Cimabue's at all, should make us lose it.

Santa Maria Novella is, naturally, full of monuments of the great Dominicans, St. Dominic, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Peter the Martyr. After a day spent among its beauties the next day should be given to Santa Croce, the great

Franciscan church. Santa Croce, too, is in the Italian Gothic style. It was the work of Arnolfo di Cambio, the architect of the Cathedral of Florence. Within this church rests Galileo Galilei, Michelangelo, and Machiavelli. There is a great monument, too, to Dante, though that noblest of Florentines lies buried at Ravenna.

The chief interest of Santa Croce to me is that here St. Francis of Assisi, most gentle and mystical of all saints, preached his gospel of Love. The pilgrim should bring to Santa Croce memory of the beautiful Canticle of St. Francis :

Most High, omnipotent, good Lord, Thine is the praise, the glory, the honour, and every benediction.

To Thee alone, Most High, these do belong, and no man is worthy to name Thee.

Praised be Thou, my Lord, with all Thy creatures, especially milord Brother Sun that dawns and lightens us ; and he, beautiful and radiant with great splendour, signifies Thee, Most High.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and the stars that Thou hast made bright and precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Wind, and for the air and cloud and the clear sky, and for all weathers through which Thou givest the sustenance to Thy creatures.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water, that is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Fire, through whom

Thou dost illumine the night, and comely is he and glad, and bold and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister, Our Mother Earth, that doth cherish and keep us, and produces various fruits with coloured flowers and the grass.

Be praised, my Lord, for those who forgive for love of Thee, and endure sickness and tribulation; blessed are they who endure in peace; for by Thee, Most High, shall they be crowned.

Be praised, my Lord, for our bodily death, from which no living man can escape; woe unto those who die in mortal sin.

Blessed are they that have found Thy most holy will, for the second death shall do them no hurt. Praise and bless my Lord, and render thanks, and serve Him with great humility.

St. Francis is surely quite the most lovable and poetic and delightful theologian that ever lived, with not a trace in all his sweetness of the *odium theologicum*. Of a different type altogether, but notable in his way too, was that fierce preacher of Florence, Savonarola. He was of the Church militant, and his fiery sermons did for a while turn Florentines from thoughts of gaiety, and would have stifled, if he had had his way, the new culture which was to an extent tinged with Neo-Paganism. But the tendency of the times was too strong for Savonarola. He died a martyr to the views he held, and his ashes

PIAZZA SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE

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stained the Arno after he had been burned in the very square where the fripperies of vanity and luxury had been offered up as a burnt-offering at the call of his eloquence a few years before.

To describe, even to mention, all the great buildings and pictures of Florence is not possible here. Briefest notice only can be given to some of the chief claims that Florence has to the attention of the traveller. The Church of St. Lorenzo has a priceless collection of medieval books given to Florence originally by Pope Leo X., one of the great Medici. There is much of Michelangelo's work, both in the sculpture and the architecture of St. Lorenzo. The Riccardi Palace was originally built for the Medici, and its chief treasure is the little chapel by Benozzo Gozzoli. Near the Riccardi Palace is the church and convent associated with Savonarola's ministry. Yet a few steps, and there can be seen Fra Angelico's old convent of St. Marco, now a museum. It contains all the best work of that Master. The Carmelite Church in the Piazza del Carmine is notable for Fra Lippo Lippi's work.

But in admiration of building, of statue, and of picture, the natural beauty of Florence should

A DISTANT VIEW OF FLORENCE

who poured into Italy. The position of Fiesole made it the guardian of the high road running from the north through the valley of the Po, and across the great barrier of the Apennines into the heart of the peninsula. In the year 540 Fiesole was completely destroyed by the barbarians. One somewhat legendary story of Fiesole tells that there on one occasion the Goths, under King Radagasius, fought against the Florentines, who, with the aid of the Roman general Stilicho, were victorious. While the battle was in progress, legends state, St. Zenobius, Archbishop of Florence, spent the hours in supplication for his people, and so efficacious were his prayers that the Patroness of the city, St. Reparata, appeared in a vision to the soldiers on the field. In her hand she held the banner of Florence, a red fleur-de-lis on a white ground, and encouraged the soldiers to continue their efforts, until the Romans arrived and the victory was won.

Benvenuto Cellini in his autobiography gives this account of the founding of Florence :

> In the chronicles drawn up by our Florentines of ancient days, men worthy of faith, according to the report of Giovanni Villani, it stands written that the

city of Florence must have been built after the pattern of the fair city of Rome. And some traces of the Colosseum and of the Baths are still to be seen near Santa Croce. The Capitol was where the Old Market is to-day. The Rotonda, built for the temple of Mars, still stands; now it belongs to our Saint John. That so it was can be very plainly seen, and none can deny it; but these buildings are much smaller than those of Rome. They say it was Julius Caesar had them built, in conjunction with certain noble Romans, who, when Fiesole had been laid siege to and taken, built a city in this place, each of them undertaking to erect one of these famous monuments. Among Julius Caesar's chief captains was a valorous man, by name Fiorino of Cellino, a hamlet about two miles from Monte Fiascone. Now this Fiorino having taken up his abode under Fiesole, where Florence now is, in order that he might be near the river Arno for the convenience of the army, all the soldiers and other persons who had intercourse with the said captain, were wont to say, "Let us go to Fiorenze,"—first, because this captain's name was Fiorino, and likewise because, from the nature of the soil, flowers grew abundantly on the spot where he had taken up his quarters. So at the foundation of the place, this name seeming to Julius Caesar a very fair one, and offered naturally, and since flowers are of good augury, he gave the name of Florence to the city. Moreover, he wished to give pleasure to his valorous captain, all the more that he had raised him from a very lowly place, and that he had been the making of such an able man. Learned contrivers and investigators of the origin of words would have the name to mean, on the flowing Arno; but this it seems impossible to accept, for Rome is on the flowing Tiber, Ferrara on the flowing Po, Lyons on the

flowing Saone, Paris on the flowing Seine, yet are their names different and come at by another road.

Fiorino, that fine egotist, Benvenuto Cellini, would have us believe, was his ancestor. Part of the story is probably the invention of Cellini's pride. But it is likely to be accurate in its main facts.

Let us from the hill of Fiesole say farewell to Florence and turn our steps towards Venice.

CHAPTER VIII

VENICE

It is an accepted principle of sociology that civilisation is best fostered by conditions of life which are neither too harsh nor too easy. The bitter hardships which man must face in the Arctic regions prevent the growth there of great states, and the too-easy conditions of the tropics discourage that strenuous spirit of self-help which is a necessary foundation for national greatness. There have been some exceptions to the general rule, that very harsh terms imposed by Nature prevent progress. The Low Countries offer one instance of a successful contest against apparently desperate conditions of life. The greatness of Venice provides another.

Picture in the mind's eye the original site of Venice, a collection of low marshy islets at the mouth of a tidal lagoon, and it will appear

VENICE AT DAWN

the most unpromising of all possible places for the building of a great city. Yet with all the discouragement of their apparently hopeless situation, the Veneti not only achieved a great city but a great state, which was in its flourishing days one of the chief Powers of Europe, courted for its friendship by the Roman Empire, by the Grand Turk, and by the Western kings and emperors. The very greatness of the obstacles in their way seems to have inspired the Veneti to the most heroic efforts. Out of the very jaws of the sea they snatched a power which at one time was almost fantastic in its might, and a thing of beauty which still survives as a joy to the world. Nature designed the place which is Venice for the sad and lonely haunt of a few sea-birds. Man has made it one of the proudest monuments of his handiwork.

Of fine virility must have been those old founders of Venice. A little band of refugees they were from Padua, which had fallen to the Northern barbarians. The mainland offered them no refuge against the savage flood. They begged pity of the sea and put up their little wattle-and-mud huts on the low banks of Torcello and Rivoalto, poor waste lands which the earth

seemed to cast off and which the sea disdained to claim.

Time showed that this choice of site, dictated by cruel necessity, had been unconsciously guided also by great good fortune. Those mud-flats later, when the Venetians began to grow to greatness, were found to be uniquely well adapted to national defence. They could not be attacked by land because of the intervening waters, nor by sea because of the shoals. The soil, too, of the little islands, enriched as it had been by the sea-birds, proved very fertile when it was reclaimed from the salt tides.

As the safety of this sea retreat was established it began to attract from the mainland many of the most adventurous and enterprising of the Italians who preferred not to bow to the yoke of the invading barbarians. Good nation-making material thus flocked to Venice. These refugees found a poor retreat, pitiful huts on marshy islands, where they had to live as the sea-birds did. But there was liberty and safety from the barbarians.

Within a little while Venice—it had not taken that name at this period—began to aspire to something more than a mere existence. The

VENICE FROM THE STEPS OF SAN GIORGIO MAGGIORE

mud-banks were found to be cultivable with some protection against the sea, and they yielded good crops. The islanders built ships and began to trade with the mainland of Italy and with the countries on the shores of the Adriatic. Solid houses replaced the wattle-and-daub huts, and it is because those houses reflected step by step the progress of Venice and the various phases of the Renaissance of European civilisation that Venice in after times was so interesting a city to the historical student. The stones of Venice told with great clearness the story of the decline of the Roman-Byzantine civilisation, of the intrusion of Arabic influences into Europe with the conquests of Saracens and Turks, of the sudden up-rise of the new Italian culture, and of the sympathetic art movements in contemporary civilisations.

So soon as Venice began to lift her head above the waters she became an object of attack for all the Powers contending then for the mastery of the world. The Roman Emperors at Byzantium, the Goths, the Franks, the Lombards, the Saracens—all had to be encountered and held off by force or by fraud. Venice felt herself not strong enough for open warfare with any of the

great Powers, but she was coolly resolute to keep the freedom of the little islets which she had so hardly earned. With a subtlety that anticipated by some generations the statecraft of Florence, the little settlement on the marshes played one enemy off against another. She was prepared with fair words for every one, but would willingly yield subjection to no one. When Theodoric was Roman Emperor the Venetians seem to have been persuaded to pay some form of tribute. But on his death they reasserted their independence, and in the struggle that followed between the Eastern and the Western Empires they sided with the Lombards. When Venice had to face the issue finally of throwing in her lot as a vassal state with either the East or the West, she took the bold step of declaring her independence of both. She withstood successfully an attack by the Franks under King Pippin, and thereafter was inclined to favour for a time the Byzantine Emperors.

In the ninth century Venice began to take something of her present form, and a steady stream of wealth started to flow into the coffers of a city which was about to assume the rôle of ancient Carthage as trader-in-chief and head naval power of the Mediterranean.

The Venetian system of government helped the progress of the city. It was a republican oligarchy designed with the sole purpose of being effective in keeping domestic peace and in deluding foreign enemies. The new city with her advancing greatness had to encounter the fierce jealousy of the Italian cities of the mainland. She had also to consider as possible enemies all the Powers outside Italy. Considering always the interests of Venice and Venice alone, she safely trod her perilous path among all these dangers, as her skilled sailors followed the dangerous waterways among the lagoons. Venice did not consider herself bound to be a " good Italian," a " good European," a " good Christian " even. She was ready to fight by the side of the Turk if that seemed the most profitable course. Her soldiers, sailors, statesmen had but one patriotism, and that was for Venice. Equally relentless was the course of domestic policy. The oligarchs of Venice would brook no interference with their plans. The dungeon and the scaffold were waiting always for any one suspected of being an enemy of the Republic. In all matters the sacrifice of the convenience of the individual to the good of the State can be noted. During the thirteenth

century, for instance, a law was passed compelling every Venetian merchant returning from a voyage to bring back some gift for the building of St. Mark's—marble, or jewel, or enamel. Thus Venice's church became a vast mosaic with votive offerings gleaned from every part of the world, usually by robbery. The Republic willed it and the merchants had to obey. For their church other churches in almost every corner of the known world were despoiled.

Thus St. Mark's to-day stands among the world's buildings unequalled for richness of material and decoration. It is a museum of sculpture of all kinds from the work of the fourth century to the latest Renaissance. The walls, inside and outside, are completely faced either with glass mosaics on gold grounds, or precious marbles and porphyries. Plain white marble is used only for sculpture, and then it is often thickly inlaid with gold. This use of inlay is almost peculiar to St. Mark's, as is also the method there adopted of encircling sculptural reliefs with backgrounds in brilliant gold and coloured glass mosaics, producing an effect of extraordinary richness. No European cathedral compares with that of Venice. The first im-

pression it gives is of a cavern of gold encrusted with precious stones, a fairy palace of an *Arabian Nights*' tale.

But in truth, St. Mark's in all its perfect beauty, its gem-like radiance, is little like a Christian fane. There is more suggestion of faith and worship in the gloomy vault-like interior of a Gothic church such as St. Gudule, Brussels, offering a feast of colour only in its jewel windows, through which one sees, as it were, a glimpse of the Paradise of the next world from the darkness and the strife of this. St. Mark's is a monument of pride, not of Christian humility. It would be more fitting as the mosque of a warlike and rapacious Islamism, or the temple of a voluptuous Paganism, or the shrine of a new Nietzchean faith.

The Venetians who built St. Mark's had little faith except in themselves, little aspiration except to exalt the material wealth and power of their city, little scruple to fight either for or against Christian Powers as the advantage of the moment suggested. St. Mark's, it seems to me, has no piety, but it is a pure expression of Art. Perhaps it is so beautiful because its builders and its decorators had no purpose other than the pursuit

of the beautiful. A conscious didactic purpose stands in the way of the full expression of Art. Withal, St. Mark's has not for my eyes the spiritual suggestiveness of a church like St. Ouen, or of those simple yet splendid spires of English village churches pointing their eloquent fingers to Heaven.

Venice in all her beauties has the same supreme æstheticism divorced from any spiritual feeling. The pride of the mind, the pomp of power, the joy of the flesh, these may be seen reflected everywhere in Venice. But, lest they should be too glaring, the kindly sea envelopes all in a faint haze which is luminous whilst it is softening, and which merges the reds and purples and golds of lusts and prides and greeds into such ordered pomp of colour as Turner loved to paint.

In the picture that is Venice, that finished conscious work of art, the reproduction on a greater scale as a city of the glories of St. Mark's, there is always a hint of cruelty, of Lamia beauty. To serve her own wonderful growth Venice despoiled her rivals remorselessly, and had never a friend whom she was not ready to consider as a rival if occasion demanded. This rapacity seems to me to show its trace in her buildings.

This I know is not a conventional view of Venice. It is far away from Wordsworth's innocent praise :

> She was a maiden city, bright and free ;
> No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
> And when she took unto herself a mate,
> She must espouse the everlasting sea.

It is far away from the rhapsodies of a hundred poets and prose writers. But it is an honest view. There are two very beautiful and very cruel landscapes of civilisation. One is Venice. The other is the harbour front of New York, with the great " sky-scrapers " suggesting the eyries of a new race of robber barons.

Considering Venice more in detail, after St. Mark's the first wonder to claim attention is the library of St. Mark's with its sumptuous collection of Byzantine books. During the Middle Ages Venice stood between East and West, holding commercial relations with both Rome and Constantinople, giving refuge to exiles from all quarters of the world. Thus her art collections and her book collections became as wonderfully rich as the temples she reared from the pillage of others.

Those Byzantine palaces of Venice which remain to this day are very interesting specimens

of an architecture which mingled some of the classic traditions with Arabic and Egyptian principles. The Polazzo Loredan on the Grand Canal—which was the favoured "street" of the merchant princes of old Venice—is one of the best of these. The Polazzo Farsetti is more Romanesque than Byzantine, but the Fondaco dei Turchi, in spite of modern changes, preserves much of the Byzantine style. In other Venetian palaces one may trace Saracen and Gothic-Arab influences. Of a later period of Venetian history are the Gothic buildings—a very much Italianised Gothic, hardly recognisable as of the same school as the severe, somewhat gloomy Gothic of northern Europe. The Ducal Palace is the best example of Venetian Gothic. Following the Gothic, came the Renaissance style, which probably reached its highest expression in the hands of the architects of Venice.

In painting the Venetians of the Renaissance were naturally great colourists. The pomp and pageant of their city made that inevitable. The Venetian school—joyous, voluptuous, "naturalistic" in a sense—had much influence on Art in Europe. Gentile Bellini, Carpaccio, Paolo Veronese, Titian, Giorgione, and Canaletto are

SHRINE AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE COURTYARD OF THE DUCAL PALACE, VENICE

the names chiefly associated with Venetian art. Titian, who lived to be over ninety, is perhaps the typical painter of the Venetian school; and his capacity for producing with equal facility a pious Madonna or a vivid Venus, according to the demand of the day, was not foreign to its spirit.

Apart from the study of the historic buildings and famous paintings, and the enjoyment of the opulent feasts of colour which Nature spreads out every day over sea and sky around Venice, the social life of the city is very charming and very easy of observation, for all the population live in the streets for the greater part of the day. The streets are the salons of the wealthy, the dormitories of the poor, and the restaurants of all classes.

Modern life in Venice is very simple and very happy. The place is crowded with beggars, but they do not seem to suffer much hardship or privation. Their rags, however dirty, are generally picturesque. Food of some sort seems always obtainable. Shelter is rarely a necessity. To do nothing brings no *ennui* in a city which seems to be continually in a pageant mood. A spirit of quiet content, of placid enjoyment, of *dolce far niente* broods over Venice with the

mists from the lagoons. No noises interrupt the dreamer. The few streets, innocent of wheeled vehicles, are to saunter in, to muse in, to sleep in. The canals, along which glide with furtive silence the black gondolas, with the appearance always of having some mysterious mission, an assassination or an assignation, do nothing to disturb the brooding calm.

In her early days Venice must have been fiercely strenuous, else she would never, from a few mud flats, have raised up the greatest naval and commercial power of a century. To-day she is content to dream over her past, tolerantly ignoring the bustle of the sight-seers who come to explore her monuments.

CHAPTER IX

NAPLES AND HER BAY

The favoured holiday resort of the Roman patrician since before the time of Julius Caesar, the refuge from harsher climes to-day of poets, statesmen, captains of industry of all Europe, the Bay of Naples, with its city, its towns, and its mountains, has a record as a place of pleasure unmatched in all the world. There is curiously little that is heroic in Neapolitan history, though a good deal that is grim and terrible comes to interrupt now and again the sound of her lutes and dancing feet. The pursuit of pleasure kills the sterner virtues. Under the burning sun, before the gay waters of the Bay, many generations have passed, always of pleasure-seekers, of pleasure-lovers, of various races. Sometimes the shriek of terror or of agony has broken into the current of laughter for a moment, but for a

moment only. The dance of life was resumed. Vesuvius might frown, or a human tyrant show a pettier, more meticulous cruelty. Naples never allowed the note of gaiety to be for long interrupted.

The character of Naples is in part, no doubt, due to the hot sun shining on the terraces between sea and mountain; in part to the almost constant brightness of the sea; in part to the fervour of the earth's subterranean fires, coming here close to the surface; in part to the mixture of races which have made up her population. It is a character very distinctive, cosmopolitan rather than Italian, a little tinged with the East, a little tinged too with African influences of long ago. Vesuvius, with burning torch dominating the Bay of Naples, suggests a good prototype of this Neapolitan character; better the Vesuvius of the dawn of the Christian era, when gay gardens ran up to the very crater of the volcano, thought to be extinct but only slumbering. Naples, under all her gaiety, has a touch of hot passion, of dormant cruelty.

Note that smiling Naples street beggar, all content and gay in his rags. Something occurs to disturb his serenity, to vex his rage. For a

moment or two he is possessed by a demon of fury. With imprecating fist he calls down all the curses of Christian and Pagan theology at the offender, then with a picturesque gesture seizes his outstretched right hand between his teeth, bites at it a second, and flings out another cry of execration. He is fierce, he is a little frightening in the intensity of his passion of hatred. Five minutes afterwards he is again a gay, smiling beggar, his white teeth suggesting nothing but amiability. That is the spirit of Naples.

"A great traveller, who had profoundly studied human nature in many parts of the world, said that if he were to find himself alone, starving, and without a penny, he would prefer of all places to find himself in the slums of Naples" (writes Sybil FitzGerald in *Naples*); "so high an opinion had he formed of this apparently degraded but kindly people. One starving man will share his wretched meal of bread and an onion with another, and both will laugh and joke the while as if it were a meal fit for a king. Misery never deadens the sense of life and amusement; and so ungovernable is the love of pleasure, they will pawn or sell their last

possession to go to a festival. A woman will sell her bed to buy a worthy dress in which to appear at her daughter's wedding, or for a first communion; and to bury their dead with pomp the people will resort to the last and most touching sacrifices. Their sense of honour is often keen, and the knife is ever ready to play a part in it. 'They belong, indeed, to the country that uses the knife.' Brothers will defend their sisters' virtue, and husbands their wives' good name, at the cost of their lives, and a wrong committed against their women is avenged to the death. Their natures are so passionate that only too easily does tragedy enter into their life; but, fortunately, they soon forget. Unlike the Sicilians, the Neapolitan poor are a people without memories. If to-day be sunny, why remember that yesterday was dark with clouds?"

Some hold that the Bay of Naples is the most beautiful harbour in the world. The claim cannot be admitted without a question. Rio Janeiro Bay is a formidable rival; Sydney Harbour is another; Hobart Harbour—very much like to the Bay of Naples with its great Mt. Wellington, an extinct volcano, standing sentinel over city and port—is yet another; and

there is a lovely Irish bay which must not be ignored. The Bay of Naples can, however, claim to be one among the world's five finest harbours. It is far finer, I think, than the port of Constantinople, with which it is often compared. Parts of Naples, the old quarters of narrow alleys and mean streets, filled with beggars and sunshine, are very like parts of Constantinople. The new Naples is of quite a different character, deserving of that hackneyed adjective "imposing," and not at all so interesting as the semi-eastern slums, with their restless, bustling, chattering population, always in a cheerful ferment about nothing in particular, moving to the spirit of that gay and shallow music which is characterised as "Neapolitan," and seems to have been written specially for the barrel organ.

In heroic associations, as I have said, Naples is somewhat poor. But its villas and streets are incomparably rich in memories of the literary, musical, and intellectual life of the world. It is the city in a special sense of Virgil and of Cicero. That eminent musician, Nero (who was perhaps not as bad a fiddler as the extravagant praise of his courtiers would have us believe), was fond of playing in the concert hall of Naples.

Nearly all the great men of the Renaissance were associated in some way with this gay southern city, the more raffish of them, such as Cellini and Boccaccio, the more closely—as was natural, seeing its immemorial character as a pleasure city. In modern times almost every poet, essayist, novelist of note has visited Naples and written of her charm. This picture of Naples in early spring is from Shelley :

> The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
> The waves are dancing fast and bright,
> Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
> The purple moon's transparent might :
> The breath of the moist earth is light
> Around its unexpanded buds ;
> Like many a voice of one delight—
> The winds', the birds', the ocean-floods'—
> The city's voice itself is soft like solitude's.

French writers in particular have been drawn to Naples, as witness Lamartine, Sainte-Beuve, De Musset, Théophile Gautier, De Lauzière, and a hundred others.

The visitor to Naples will find it difficult to tear himself away from a lazy enjoyment of the general charm of this volcanic city, and set to a detailed examination of its art treasures and its monuments. But, supposing that effort success-

THE DOGANA, BAY OF NAPLES

fully made, there is very much to engage attention. The National Museum, with fine examples of Titian and Velasquez as its chief art treasures, but more interesting for its very complete collection of objects illustrating the Etruscan and Roman civilisations, should be first visited, and then the National Library (a benefit this from the Bourbon regime). Near by is the Palazzo Filangieri, containing a fine collection of the Bourbon period. The National Museum has some famous sculptures, including the "Flora Farnese," the "Toro Farnese," and the "Hercules Farnese," all of which were recovered from the Baths of Caracalla in Rome, and which formerly belonged to the Farnese collection, the "Doriforo Venus of Capua," the "Amazons," the "Wounded Gaul," the "Dead Giant," and the "Venus Callipige." Among the bronzes the most notable are the "Narcissus," the "Drunken Faun," the "Dancing Faun," the "Sileno," the "Victory," "Apollo the Cithern-player," "Efebo," "Bacchus and Ampelo," the "Resting Mercury," the "Sleeping Faun," the "Bearded Bacchus," and the "Drunken Silenus." The art student will find it his chief interest in these and other Neapolitan museums to trace the influence of Greek

art on the artists of southern Italy. Other great museums are the Capodimonte and the St. Martino. The University of Naples, founded during the Renaissance, should also be visited. It has a great reputation throughout the world, especially for zoological research, and does something to relieve the Neapolitan character from its general reputation for frivolity.

After the great institutions the slum life of Naples is worthy of a special study—a study to be undertaken with some caution, for Naples is the chief city of the Camorra, which is still a real power, though it has had a check lately from the wholesale prosecutions of members. The Camorra is a great trade-union of criminals and would-be criminals, recruited from the discontented and the lazy and the thoughtless. Its system is as old as the Conspiracy of Catiline, which in its turn was probably as old as the founding of the first big city of any of the world's civilisations. The Camorra appeals to those who are poor to organise so as to levy upon those who are rich. Blackmail, theft, brigandage, murder—all come within its scope. The rank and file probably get very little real benefit from the Camorra, which feeds fat only its leaders; but the organisation

appeals to their desire for revenge on a social system which does not treat them very humanely; and revenge, as Bacon says, is "a kind of wild justice." A modern historian of Italy (Villari) throws a good deal of the responsibility for the existence of the Camorra on the poverty of the lower classes:

> Italy may indeed continue as entirely free, may have her Budgets as perfectly balanced as she choose, and yet may remain a nation destitute of moral significance. She requires, then, a new ideal, and that ideal cannot be other than social justice, which she should apply before it is demanded. The man who lives in the midst of slavery, side by side with the poor and disinherited, without reacting against the causes of that slavery and that misery, is a man unworthy of his own freedom, and must sink inevitably into moral degradation. In such a case, the Camorra, the Mafia, the brigandage will always exist, and will eat into the marrow of the country's spine.

It is when the environs of the city Naples come to be visited that the full joyfulness of the Bay is appreciated. The Riviera di Chiaia and the Via Caracciolo are ways of fairy beauty. Posilipo shelters villas as lovely as any the world knows. Bagnoli and Pozzuoli are glowing with the beauty of to-day and rich also with associa-

tions of history, with the memories of Cicero, Nero, Caligula. Near the remains of the Appian Way, which led to Capua, are many Roman remains, the Amphitheatre and the Temples of Diana, Serapide, and Neptune. Baia has the ruins of great Roman baths, a Temple of Mercury, and a Temple of Diana the Light-bringer. At Capua is a Roman Amphitheatre, and Pesto has a Temple to Neptune twenty-five centuries old, and still preserving its majestic Doric lines. Capri is a jewel island, with its lovely cliffs—"the seats of living rock" of Virgil's *Aeneid*—and charming grottoes. Lately Capri has been much Germanised. It found favour in the eyes of the late Herr Krupp, the millionaire gun-founder, and his villa attracted quite a numerous German colony to the island. This friendly German occupation makes for cleanliness, but has caused a certain loss of picturesqueness through the islanders learning to imitate German manners and costumes.

It is now time to say good-bye to Naples and her Bay, and see something of the lesser cities of Italy.

CHAPTER X

SOME OTHER CITIES

Rome, Venice, Florence, Naples do not exhaust the list of the great cities of Italy, nor of the typical cities of the peninsula. In a country where the city-state, under Prince or Republic, was so usual through the Middle Ages, the individuality of different centres became most strongly marked. There are at least twenty Italian towns with definite characters of their own, but space is not available to describe them all.

Milan, an old capital of Italy under the Roman Emperors, later a great provincial capital, is notable to-day chiefly for its Cathedral, "the marble monster" of Italy. It is vast, awesome in its vastness, and is built altogether of marble, in an Italian Gothic style, modified by the addition of a forest of pinnacles, which give it something

of a Byzantine effect. All the turrets, buttresses, and pinnacles are crowned by statues, and the bewildering profusion of carving gives an impression of an incredible expenditure of labour. For all its greatness, Milan Cathedral smells a little of the lamp. The profusion of carving in some of the Flamboyant Gothic churches conveys an air of piety—of an unnecessary degree of piety sometimes. Milan suggests labour—sometimes unnecessary labour.

But the interior of the Cathedral is really beautiful. Wholly of marble from Lake Maggiore, marble which has mellowed beautifully with time, the fane has a soft white radiance suggestive of the first of dawn in Paradise. Milan Cathedral is so great that it can always impress its own atmosphere on any congregation, however numerous, that gathers under its marble roof.

Milan is a great musical centre, and its Teatro della Scala is one of the finest and largest opera-houses in the world. Other attractions of this city—one of the most opulent in Italy—are the Picture Gallery of Brera and the Castello Sforzesco. In the miserable days which closed the nineteenth century for Italy, Milan was the chief centre of the revolutionary movement, and during the

"Three Days" of Milan scores of citizens and soldiers were sacrificed in the street fighting. That, fortunately, marked the worst of the social crisis through which Italy was passing, and since then there has been a steady amelioration of social conditions.

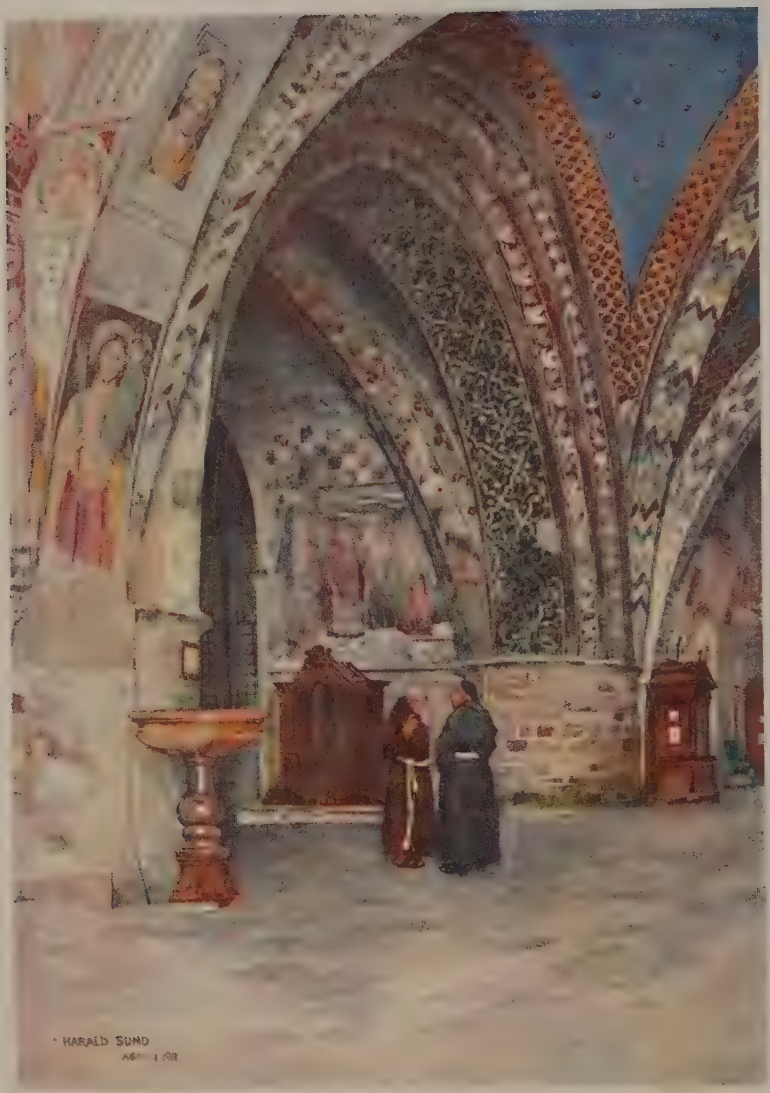
Other interesting Lombardy towns are: Lecco on Lake Como, once an Etruscan city, then colonised by Celts, then by the Romans, now a flourishing silk centre; Varenna, where the parish church has a wonderfully sweet peal of bells; Bergamo, Brescia, Monza, Varese, and Voghera.

Genoa, "the superb," is the chief port of Italy, and will be associated always with the name of Columbus. The Republic of Genoa was in ancient days a rival to Venice. The city preserves still some of her fine medieval churches, with façades of black and white marble bands, and a number of magnificent sixteenth-century palaces. The earlier churches of Genoa are in a mixture of French Romanesque and the Pisan style. The palaces of the Genoese patricians are famous for sumptuous architecture and their artistic collections. The Campo Santo or cemetery of Genoa is one of the chief features of the city; its situation is of great natural beauty, and

it is remarkable for its monuments, by the foremost sculptors of modern Italy.

Just as Genoa is the chief commercial port of Italy, claiming 40 per cent of her total trade, Spezia, near by, is the chief naval station. Savona, another Ligurian port, is the site of great iron manufactures, and Acqui in the neighbourhood is a well-known spa. It was known to the Romans, and has a modern fame for gouty and nervous diseases.

The belt of coast which lies between the mountains and the sea along the Gulf of Genoa and the Bay of Spezia is the Italian Riviera. The Riviera di Ponente, "the coast of the setting sun," lies between Nice and Genoa, and the Riviera di Levante, "the coast of the rising sun," between Genoa and Spezia. All this district enjoys a mild climate, and its vegetation in many places is sub-tropical. San Remo climbs the slope of a steep hill and overlooks a small bay. It is protected towards the north by hills rising gradually from 500 to 8000 feet. In climate it is one of the most favoured places on the coast, and since 1861 it has enjoyed a great reputation as a winter resort. The older town, with its narrow steep streets and lofty sombre



THE LOWER CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS, ASSISI

houses, contrasts effectively with the new visitors' town.

Verona, in the province of Venetia, is best known to the English-speaking world as the scene where Shakespeare set the unhappy story of the love of Romeo and Juliet. The great dramatist made this ancient city the scene, too, of another play, *Two Gentlemen of Verona.* It is a beautiful city, built almost wholly of marble. Marble is used everywhere. The posts, steps, ledges, doorways, balconies, even the street gutters are of marble. The Piazza Erbe (in Roman days the Forum) is now the fruit market, through which trams run down the Street of the Lions, past the house where Juliet is said to have lived. In the Giardino Giusti of Verona are some of the oldest and tallest cypresses of Europe. A bronze tablet attests that one is four hundred years old. The Via Nuova of Verona is a narrow street of shops closed at both ends to horse traffic. It leads off the Piazza Erbe, and is the evening promenade of the citizens. Following it one reaches the huge city square, one corner of which contains the Arena, beside which the oldest things in Verona are new. Padua is another interesting city

of the Venetia province, famous for its university.

Turin, the capital of Piedmont, on the banks of the Po, is a mostly modern city. The Alps make a fine background for its landscapes. It is the ancestral city of the House of Savoy. In its environs are the famous castles of Tivoli, Moncalieri, Stupinigi, Racconigi, Venaria, Agle, and the great monastery of San Michele.

The province of Emilia, named from the Via Aemilia, the Roman road which traversed it, has for its capital Bologna, the "Learned," situated at the edge of the plain of Emilia, and famous for its university, which was founded in the eleventh century and acquired a European reputation as a school of jurisprudence. The city's picture-gallery contains many celebrated paintings, including Raphael's "St. Cecilia." The churches of Bologna are numerous and of great interest, dating from the thirteenth century onwards. Bologna has been shut in upon itself since the Middle Ages, and still keeps the Middle Ages within its walls. The churches and public buildings are all fantastic and typically medieval. More fantastic than all—and not in themselves beautiful, and serving no purpose—are the two

leaning towers, a caprice of their period. At the Museo Civico are wonderful relics of a very old civilisation, spoils of Etruscan sepulchres.

Ravenna stands in a marshy plain six miles from the sea, but connected with it by means of the Corsini Canal. No other city in the world offers so many and such striking examples of the ecclesiastical architecture of the centuries from the fifth to the eighth. Dante is buried at Ravenna, and his tomb is a square-domed structure, with a bas-relief representing the poet, and a sarcophagus where, in an urn, lie his ashes. A cold, chill city is Ravenna. The narrow streets are always wind-swept, and the damp air seems to be attacking the life of the buildings. Besides its association with Dante, Ravenna is notable as the burial-place of Theodoric, king of the Goths, and as the residence for a time of the poet Byron.

Rimini on the Adriatic coast (near by is the petty Republic of San Marino, the smallest independent state of the world); Modena (notable for the Biblioteca Estense); Parma (known to Europe for its violets and its Royal University); and Piacenza (its cathedral has a massive brick campanile, 223 feet high, with an iron

cage attached to one of its windows, for the confinement of persons guilty of sacrilege or treason)—are other notable towns in this quarter of Italy.

Pisa, on the opposite coast, was found to be an interesting city by Byron and Shelley, both of whom lived and wrote there. The people of Pisa are somewhat gipsy-like. The girls and women are very handsome, with a certain wild charm and an engaging impudence. The men are a little rough and hot-tempered. The atmosphere of the Middle Ages still survives at Pisa. The women chatter round fountains, drawing water in little copper cans, all of the same pattern, elegantly shaped like ancient vases.

In Umbria the chief city is Perugia, on a group of hills overlooking the valley of the Tiber. Its Sala del Cambio is famous for the decorations by Perugino, and other art treasures are the Gothic façades (fourteenth century) of the Palazzo del Municipio, and the marble fountain of Cambio. Near Perugia is Assisi, the town of St. Francis. Just below Assisi is the original oratory of St. Francis, the cell where he died, and the garden which he loved so well. Cortona, overlooking

the famous Trasimene Lake, is another fine Umbrian town.

Following the road south through Central Italy one next encounters Pesaro, famous for its majolica; Urbino, the birthplace of Raphael, and Loreto, a famous shrine of the Virgin Mary. But in truth it is hardly possible to probe into the history of any town or village of all Italy without discovering some treasure. An instance which will occur is little Portofino of Liguria. It was the Portus Delphinus of the Romans, and known without doubt to the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and the Carthaginians, and was a favoured port of transit when the voyage from Rome to Gaul was made by sea. Then in the Middle Ages Portofino was a port of call for the Crusaders, and was visited once by the British King Richard Cœur de Lion. In the twelfth century it fell into the hands of the Roman Church, and was governed by the Abbot of St. Fruttuoso, who exacted heavy taxes from its inhabitants. They had to give him the finest fish at a very low price, and the owner of each net was compelled to send up two smaller fishes weekly for the monastery kitchen. The quay of Portofino was the exclusive property of the

Church. This the enterprising prelate let out for shipbuilding; the archives in Genoa tell that in 1269, when one of the Dukes of Genoa wished to build a ship there, he was actually obliged to pay the Abbot tribute.

In return for the taxes they paid to the Church the people had the comfort of some delightful legends. One of these tells of the removal of the ashes of the three saints—Fruttuoso, Angurio, and Eulogio—from the town of Tarrasone, in Spain. These ashes were given into the charge of some of Fruttuoso's disciples, who were instructed that they would be inspired as to their destination. After voyaging about the Mediterranean for two days and two nights they were told by an angel to disembark. A fiery dragon, however, guarded the shore, and roaring lions held the little bay. A terrific storm and darkness arose, then an invisible hand precipitated the dragon into the sea and tamed the lions, who, according to the legend, marked out with their feet the site of the church which was to be a resting-place for the sacred relics. One should not grudge a little fish to a church which lions helped to build!

Portofino had a stirring history through all

the ages. It was captured at different times by the Saracens and the Turks. Later it was fought for by the Genovese and the Pisans. Again, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, it was the prize coveted by English, French, Spaniards, and Austrians. Still later Napoleon annexed it for France, and gave it his own name. Now it is safely under the wing of United Italy, and after twenty centuries of almost continuous strife can rest.

Yes, all Italy is saturated with romance and history. There is no need for the traveller to keep to the beaten tracks of tourists. Everywhere he may find beautiful scenes reflecting the enchanting light of a great past.

CHAPTER XI

POMPEII : THE GUARDIANSHIP OF ANCIENT TREASURES

A FEATURE of the new Italy of to-day, which I have noted before as worthy of all praise, is the sturdy spirit of guardianship which she displays towards her national treasures of art and archæology. There are in every country, but most of all in Italy, objects which, though they may have fallen into the hands of individuals or of societies, and become thus, in a sense, "private property," yet belong most truly to the nation at large. Their associations with the history and life of the community make it an impiety to remove them from their native surroundings.

Yet this is an impiety of which our modern civilisation is very fond—is, indeed, in its mistaken sense of things, often rather proud. Rich people in many parts of the world set themselves the

THE HOUSE OF THE FAUN, POMPEII

task of "collecting," to amuse their leisure and to exhaust their money; and whilst much of this "collecting" is honourable enough, another part of it is altogether desecratory and condemnable. To attempt to take for a foreign museum from a country any monument that is an integral part of her history shows not an appreciation of art or of ancientry, but a perverted instinct of highway robbery.

Italy at one time was the happy hunting-ground of the sort of collector who is willing to rifle tombs and desecrate fanes to gratify an essentially vulgar acquisitiveness and an evil desire for a kind of notoriety. Now the monuments and archaeological treasures of Italy are better guarded than those of any other country, far better guarded, for instance, than those of England,—a land which seems as careless of her own treasures as she has been greedy after the treasures of other lands.

From a very early date, even before the days of United Italy, there was shown a desire by various governments in Italy to put an end to the looting of the country for the museums of the world. By the Doria-Pamphilis edict of 1802, for instance, offences against the law

prohibiting the export of national treasures of Art might be punished by five years at the galleys! In 1903 United Italy passed an Act prohibiting the exportation of any works of national historical or art interest, and a list of those works was published. Then in 1909 a very thorough measure was passed, which has been cited since as a pattern for other nations, and which has inspired legislative projects in Holland, Austria, Prussia, and even Norway and Iceland.

Under the present Italian law objects — immovable or movable — of interest for history, archaeology, palaeontology, or art, when belonging to public bodies, are inalienable, but may pass by sale from one such body to another by leave of the Minister of Public Instruction. When such objects are private property, and the owners have been notified by the authorities of their importance, no sale or alienation is permitted without notification to the Minister of Public Instruction. If a contract of sale has been drawn up, the Government has the right to purchase the object at the price agreed in the contract, any sale privately effected in contravention of these provisions being null and void.

Art. 8 of the law runs as follows: "It is forbidden to export from the kingdom objects the interest of which for history, archaeology, or art, is of such a kind that their exportation would institute a serious loss for history, archaeology, or art." The possessor of a work of art of any kind who wishes to export it must give notice at the exportation office, where it will be decided whether it is of a character to bring it under the above category. If the decision be that it has *not* this exceptional value, the Government may, if it choose, purchase the work at the price demanded by the exporter. If, on the other hand, it be declared of a kind that cannot be exported, the Government may offer to purchase it, but if no agreement to this effect can be reached, the object is returned to the owner, but with the condition that it must be kept within the kingdom and maintained in a proper condition.

With regard to the latter stipulation it is provided elsewhere, in Art. 7, that if a monument in private hands be suffering damage, and the proprietor will not take the measures of preservation, the Government can resume it. The Act confirms an arrangement made by a brief

measure passed in 1907, according to which a sum of five million lire was placed to the credit of the Minister of Public Instruction " to provide for the eventual acquisition of objects immovable and movable that possess an important interest for history, archaeology, or art."

There has been some outcry at the severity of this Italian law. Cannot the impoverished nobleman do as he likes with his own property? is one question asked with some indignation. Another objection comes from those who claim that it is of advantage to a country that " curios " from its monuments should go to other lands. If to " curios " is given a trifling interpretation, that is true enough. But the remains of ancient civilisations in a land should certainly remain *in situ* as a general rule, and all national monuments, including pictures and sculptures of historic interest, should be guarded against exportation.

The rage for " collection " in these days takes such strange forms that stringent guardianship of shrines is necessary. The palace where Wagner died at Venice was for a long time kept open to the public by the generous owner. He was willing that admirers of the great musician should

pay their respects to Wagner's memory in his actual death-chamber. But he found that all the movable articles in the palace were being pillaged by curio-hunters. When these were baulked of their prey in that direction by the removal of all ornaments and curtains, they attacked the wood-work of the furniture, of the floors, of the walls. The privilege of entering the palace finally had to be withdrawn. The rabid vulgarity and dishonesty of a few inflicted that penalty on the many.

As an instance of what vulgarity the collector may be guilty of, I recall the visit of the present King and Queen of Great Britain, when they were Prince and Princess of Wales, to the Overseas Dominions. At one port, when the royal yacht was made available to sightseers, all kinds of movable objects disappeared; curtains and hangings were snipped away; and, according to one account, the straw litter of the cow, which was carried on the vessel to supply the royal party with milk, was seized upon for "souvenirs."

Against the display of such a spirit, alike stupid and predatory, in more important matters no legislation can be too severe. Italy has had in the past very good reason to know the ruth-

lessness of the foreign collector, and the temptation of big cash payments he would offer to Italians having as their private property objects of historic interest. The present law provides safeguards against both the greed of the collector and the weakness of the owner, and does its needful work in the most effective way with the exportation prohibition.

Some notice has been already given to the archaeological work now being carried on by the Italian government. At Rome that work has led to curious revelations of the social life of the ancients, showing that very many of our modern " discoveries " of articles of convenience is rather a rediscovery of lost inventions. But it is to Pompeii that the traveller must turn for the most complete picture of the ancient life of Italy. There is no need in these days to retell at any length the story of Pompeii, the little city which in the first century of the Christian era was overwhelmed by an eruption of Vesuvius, and, as it were, sealed up to bring down to our age an exact picture of life as it was lived then.

Perhaps some day research in the Polar circles may bring to light a primitive settlement of a remote age preserved in ice. If, as some

theorists hold, the ice regions of the world changed their position very suddenly at one time through a rebalancing of the earth on its axis, such a thing is not impossible. Indeed I remember reading somewhere of the discovery, in the icy regions of Siberia, of a mammoth—tusks, hide, flesh, bones and all—preserved in a natural cold storage for untold centuries. The account, if memory serves me well, was somewhat spoiled for acceptance as veracious by the additional detail, that one of the discoverers cut a steak off the mammoth and ate the perfectly preserved meat. But it is the way of story-tellers sometimes to spoil a good tale with overmuch detail. An irreverent journalist once—to fill an odd corner of his paper—invented a story of how the original Ark of Noah had been discovered by an exploring party on the slopes of Mount Ararat. It was a well-told story, with just enough of convincing detail; and it was accepted by many worthy people as a fact, perhaps doing, in its passage around the world, more good than harm in reinforcing here and there a simple faith. But it was finally spoiled when a still more irreverent journalist added to the original story the detail that the bunk wherein Ham had slept

was identified by a spot of grease. After that it was no more to be believed.

The discovery of the ice settlement is not yet. But Pompeii is a living fact to show what wonderful things are possible in this world, even to the preservation of the details of a perished civilisation by the agency of fire, which has usually no other mission than to destroy.

Pompeii was a very old city of ancient Italy. At the time of its foundation Vesuvius was a quiescent volcano, believed to be extinct, welcoming to its very summit the vineyard and the orchard. The Oscans were the original settlers, so far as we know, on the site. The Greek colonists, swarming out from the Aegean and founding prosperous cities in Sicily, discovered, too, the charm of the Bay of Naples, and settled in numbers at Pompeii. Then the Samnites, a mountain people, ruled in the town, until mighty Rome, consolidating Italy by the tramp of her legions, added the southern provinces to her territories. Pompeii under Roman dominion, but still much influenced by Greek colonisation, was a luxurious and prosperous town until the social wars of the days of Sulla, when she joined with other Italian towns in a

STABIAN STREET, POMPEII

vain effort to shake off the yoke of the city by the Tiber. After that war, Pompeii settled down again to be a pleasant appanage of Rome, a kind of Brighton to the London of the day. Nero was fond of Pompeii they say: certainly he was of the neighbouring Naples. Martial, Seneca, Tacitus, Pliny, knew and wrote of the place. Cicero had a villa there, where he is said to have written that book on ethics (*De Officiis*) which has been the bane of many a schoolboy since.

In the midst of all the pleasant life of this "week-end" resort of the Roman of the early Empire there came in the year 63 a great earthquake which shook Campania to its foundations. Tacitus and Seneca both record this earthquake, which so shattered Pompeii that it was a serious question whether it was worth the while to rebuild the town. Writes Mr. W. M. Mackenzie in his very interesting *Pompeii* (A. and C. Black):

> A pair of curious but exceedingly interesting memorials of this all-important disaster have been preserved in the form of votive bas-reliefs. One is due to the gratitude for what must have been a lucky escape on the part of the banker Caecilius Jucundus. The bust of Jucundus in bronze was found in his house, and is a most striking piece of realistic portraiture. The close-cropped bullet head with spreading ears, the warty

nose and chin, and the keen, calculating, yet good-natured expression of face, typify the genial because prosperous merchant. As such, too, timid and religiously fearful. On the day of the earthquake he was at the upper end of the Forum, and had the terrifying experience of seeing the great Temple of Jupiter and the equestrian statues on either side collapse toward the south. Probably in the crowd that would be there lives were lost, and Jucundus, sadly unnerved, vowed the sacrifice of a bull to his household gods should he set eyes safely upon them again. Then he employed a cheap, unskilful artist to perpetuate the fact of his vow and its motive. Another citizen had a similar experience near the Gate of Vesuvius, where he saw gate and walls solidly shaken and a chariot with two mules upset, and similarly expressed in a special sacrifice his gratitude at being spared. But in truth the city as a whole furnishes tangible evidence of the seriousness of the catastrophe. The temples and all colonnaded buildings suffered especially; the Forum was a wreck, and was still a yard of rebuilding and restoration when the final catastrophe came.

That final catastrophe was delayed for sixteen years. Then the darkness of death came over Pompeii, and its eager, palpitating life was smothered under the hail of ashes from the revived volcano. The earthquake had been a warning that Mother Earth was labouring at one of the periodical readjustments of her surface. Now the way was opened for a gush of fire which

overwhelmed Pompeii and Herculaneum, another city of Campania; but overwhelmed without absolutely annihilating. The life of Pompeii passed away, but its skeleton was preserved until the first excavations of explorers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The story of the overwhelming has come down to posterity with vivid clearness from the accounts of the younger Pliny, who saw the tragedy from one of the ships of the Roman fleet stationed in the Bay of Naples.

It was in 1748 that excavators began first to uncover the city which Mt. Vesuvius had sealed. Their purpose was to seek art treasures. The more modern plan is to strive to restore to view what is left of Pompeii without any disturbance of the contents of the houses. It was not until the very end of the eighteenth century that anything approaching this scientific investigation was attempted. The progress was somewhat interrupted by the Napoleonic wars, but the kings of the Napoleonic era put the work on the right basis when they decided that the whole site of the buried cities should be acquired by the government and systematically explored. That good plan was broken down by subsequent

Bourbon rulers of the kingdom of Naples. But when in 1860 Naples was incorporated in the kingdom of Italy the work of uncovering, and to an extent "restoring," Pompeii was undertaken in a true and reverent system of scientific inquiry. Signor Fiorelli was the first leader in this work, and his tradition has been preserved and bettered since. The Pompeii of to-day offers to the Italian citizen and to the visitor to Italy a record, which becomes ampler and clearer with every year, of the domestic life of the early Roman Empire.

CHAPTER XII

THE ITALIAN COUNTRY-SIDE

THE natural beauty of Italy is so great, and so richly enhanced with monuments and ruins, that it would be impossible in the course of one brief chapter to give an adequate indication of all the charm of the country-side. It will be wiser to devote special attention to some particular and peculiar feature of Italian scenery.

Let it then be observed in passing that the Italian landscape in general is much brightened and improved by the character of the cultivation, by the usual brilliant colouring of the cottages and villas, and by the glowing hues which the people of the rural districts still favour for their dress; and let us attempt a somewhat closer examination of one specially Italian landscape feature—the northern lake district. One may not ignore the beauties of the Italian Alps and

Apennines with their successive rings of verdure from the orange groves of the lowest slopes, past the vineyards, to the chestnuts and then the firs. But the Haute Savoie, the Tyrol, and Switzerland offer mountain scenery as fine. The seascapes of Italy—the dunes of the Adriatic, the enchantments of great inlets like the Bay of Naples, the gorgeous beaches of the Italian Riviera—are as beautiful, almost, as any in the world. But they can be matched in other parts of Europe. The Italian lakes, however, have a special charm incomparable with any other scenes of natural beauty. They best of all then may be taken as typical of the beauty of the Italian country-side.

The majority of the Italian lakes—Garda, Idro, Iseo, Como, Varese, and Maggiore—are partly or wholly in Lombardy, and can be best reached from Milan. But if the traveller intends to make a systematic exploration of the Italian lake district he had best enter it from the Austrian frontier by way of Lake Lugano, which is only in part an Italian lake, but is purely Italian in its atmosphere and traditions. (The Lugano people, however, have been affected by their severance from Italy.) Monte Generoso, near Lugano, provides one of the most wonderful

views in Europe. The mountain itself is of exquisite beauty, especially when it is decked in its flower garlands during spring and summer. Indeed, if one may choose one's time, all the Italian lake district should be visited in spring and summer. But the view from Generoso is always superb :

> Beneath is spread like a green sea
> The waveless plain of Lombardy,
> Bounded by the vaporous air,
> Islanded by cities fair ;
> Underneath Day's azure eyes,
> Ocean's nursling, Venice, lies—
> A peopled labyrinth of walls,
> Amphitrite's destined halls,
> Which her hoary sire now paves
> With his blue and beaming waves.

Como is the gem of the Italian lakes. The upper portion of this lovely little sheet of water has been so beautified by Nature and man as to give an impression of deliberate and designed decoration. The same effect, but with rarely the same bright atmosphere, is to be noticed on some of the finer reaches of the Thames. There is a wonderful bright, light delicacy in the air of Como, as in the air of Italy generally, on a fine day, and this is one of the particular charms of

the land. The Italian lake landscape on a stormy day has another kind of fascination. The water then is lashed into great waves, all the colour flees from the mountains, which show their outlines harsh, gloomy, threatening. Italian scenery is very much dependent on the weather. On a fine day land and water glow and revel in the sunshine and seem filled with a conscious joy. When a storm rages down, the earth responds with a petulant and sombre air. It sulks beneath the lash of the rain, seems to shiver blankly in the wind and to be filled with dismay. Fortunately, the weather is usually fine in Italy, and storms are ordinarily as short-lived as they are violent.

Around Como, Varenna with its castle-crowned hill, the wooded Serbelloni peninsula, and lovely Bellagio and Mennaggio, attract the eye by their beauty of form ; and there is always, too, some interest of history to give another charm to the landscape. Lake Como was the Lacus Larius of the Romans, and has been sung by Virgil and Claudian and described by the Plinys, the younger and the elder, who had villas there. Cato also wrote of the beauties of Como, which was, throughout many years of the Roman

BELLAGIO FROM THE VILLA MELZI, LAKE COMO

Republic and Empire, the favoured retreat of the great men of Rome.

If it is not a little irreverent to mention the fact, Lake Como has in addition to its beauty great attractions of sport for the visitor. The fishing in the lake and in the River Adda is good. Wild fowl shooting may also be enjoyed, and chamois hunting on the hills. It is in wild flower life, however, that Como is richest. The marsh flowers are especially lovely; and the red lilies and the pinks in great masses give vivid colouring to the rocky hills, whilst the oleanders with their pink aromatic flowers run vivid streams of colour through the ravines.

Around Como are many castles and strongholds of great medieval interest. There is, for example, Bellano, at the entrance to Val Sassina. The Visconti of Milan were lords of Bellano in the fourteenth century, and their coat of arms (a serpent swallowing a child) can still be seen in many places. Tradition credits the origin of these arms to Ottone Visconti, who in the First Crusade killed a Saracen giant whose shield bore the device of a dragon swallowing a naked child. Bellano, facing the north, loses the sunshine in the winter. The adjoining town of Varenna,

looking south, has the sun for the greater part of the year. A local proverb says, "Let him who wishes to experience the pains of hell go in summer to Varenna and in winter to Bellano."

Above Varenna is a tree-clad hill on which stands the ruin of a castle where Theodolinda, Queen of Lombardy, died. She was the daughter of the King of Bavaria. Flavius, King of the Lombards, for political reasons, desired to marry her. Wishing to see her before irrevocably committing himself to an offer, he went in disguise with some followers to the court of Bavaria and promptly fell in love with the charming and beautiful princess. She responded in kind. After one year King Flavius died suddenly, and the Lombards were so devoted to his widow that they agreed to recognise as their king any prince chosen by her as her second husband. Subsequently she married Agilulf, Duke of Turin, whom she converted to Christianity, to the great delight of Pope Gregory the Great.

One of Italy's most precious relics is the historic iron crown sent by St. Gregory to Theodolinda as a reward for her services to the Church. It is a plain fillet of iron, said to have been made of one of the nails used at the

Crucifixion of the Redeemer, and to have been brought to Rome by the Empress Helena. This fillet of iron was enclosed in a gold crown of Byzantine design. It is now preserved in the Treasury of Monza Cathedral, and is famous as the "iron crown of Lombardy." Though strongly opposed in the act by the clergy, King Victor Emmanuel of Italy insisted on this relic being temporarily sent to Rome when, after his father's murder, he took the accession oath. Wearing the iron crown, he delivered his first speech to his nation.

Near Varenna is the curious waterfall of Fiume di Latte. A milk-white cascade bursts from a hillside cavern above the lake shore, and rushes down a rocky channel to the lake. In addition to its colour, the intermittent character of the fall of so large a volume of water gives the torrent a great interest. The fall usually begins in March, and increases in volume as the heat increases. This is easily accounted for by the melting of the glaciers and the snow on the higher slopes of Monte Codeno. But in the early summer, when the sun is quickly melting the ice and snow in the mountains, the fall becomes intermittent. One day it is a roaring

torrent, the next it almost ceases, and then suddenly increases again to its former volume. The torrent has been known entirely to disappear in summer, and in mid-winter to descend in great volume. The two Plinys, who dearly loved the lake of Como, do not mention Fiume di Latte, though they carefully describe other natural peculiarities of the district. It would be interesting if they had followed Herodotus' example in seeking to examine into the rise and fall of the Nile, a phenomenon which sadly puzzled the ancient mind.

The south-eastern arm of Lake Como is known as Lago di Lecco and has some fine villas. On one shore of the lake is Lierna, once a great Roman stronghold, now chiefly celebrated for its black marble quarries, from which the stone was quarried for Como Cathedral. Lago di Lecco is much favoured by fishermen seeking the little fish known as *agoni*. The fishermen use nets with cow-bells attached to the floats so that they may know their position. The sound of these bells over the water and the flare of the fishermen's torches at night make this lake fishing a very pretty industry.

If the beauty of Como palls at any time it

A GARDEN AT CADENABBIA, LAKE COMO

is possible to get the relief of contrast by a visit to San Giovanni, which was the old headquarters of the Inquisition of the Arch-diocese of Milan. There are enough ugly and horrible stories of torture and cruelty to be gathered at San Giovanni to make one forget for a time all the Paradise-like beauty of the lake.

A characteristic Italian lake villa is the Carlotta, near Tremezzo. It is surrounded by woods and lovely gardens. It is now owned by the Duke Saxe-Meiningen. Within the villa is much fine sculpture, including the original " Cupid and Psyche " by Canova—unfortunately much hackneyed now by copyists. The villa has the fine frieze by Thorwaldsen which represents Alexander the Great's entry into Babylon. It was originally done to the order of Napoleon I. for one of the Quirinal halls in Rome. Before the completion of the work Napoleon was a prisoner and an exile. Thorwaldsen was able to finish his work through the generosity of Count Sommariva.

The gardens of the Villa Carlotta are of rare beauty. Masses of azaleas of every hue, roses burgeoning over balustrades, Madonna lilies, creamy magnolias, giant geraniums, flaunt every-

where a glory of colour. The gardens, too, are full of bird-life—of thrushes, blackbirds, and finches; and on still summer nights the nightingales of the Carlotta gardens and those of San Giovanni across the lake outvie each other in song. Fireflies the while dance through the trees, and glowworms light the mossy banks. It is the typical Italian beauty—passionate, sensuous, operatic.

Lake Maggiore has a sterner and bolder beauty than Lake Como. But it has not the same charm of historical associations. Indeed it is singularly lacking in traditions of enterprise, and in the political and artistic associations which give Como so much fascination apart from its natural beauties. Maggiore is the entrance gate to far-reaching waterways. Some early writers believed that it was owing to the fact that merchant vessels from the lake could reach the Adriatic and Mediterranean seas by the rivers Ticino and Po, that the name "Maggiore" was given to it, though it is not the largest lake in Italy.

At the north-west extremity of the lake is the mouth of the Val Maggia, a fascinating mountain pass. It enjoys a mild equable climate superior

to that of the French and Italian Rivieras. It is entirely free from winds, and basks in perpetual sunshine during November, December, and January.

At Laveno are the most attractive scenic views of Lake Maggiore. Above this town rises the grass-clad mountain of Sasso del Ferro, from which there is a splendid view across the lake of Mount Rosa on one side and across the Lombardy plains to Milan on the other. Sasso del Ferro is carpeted to its crest with wild flowers of every hue. Perched on the southern side of the mountain is the Monastery of Santa Caterina del Sasso, erected over the cell of a fourteenth century mystic named Besozza, who, expiating his early sins, retired to a cave on Sasso del Ferro, to live thenceforth on the alms of the public. Inside of the Monastery Church is a small chapel, above the altar of which hangs a huge block of rock, arrested apparently by an invisible force in its fall from the lofty precipice above. Tradition relates that whilst Mass was being said at the altar the falling block of stone was arrested in its course by the direct intervention of the Madonna, who checked its descent when the wrecking of the altar appeared certain.

Saint Carlo Borromeo, whose enormous bronze statue of 70 ft. high, standing on a pedestal 30 ft. high, towers over the surrounding country, is the presiding genius of Lake Maggiore. An ascent into the head of the statue is provided by means of ladders in the interior.

I have attempted to suggest rather than to describe at length the charm of two of the Italian lakes. There are many others almost as beautiful and—the lakes explored—the traveller may taste elsewhere, in plain and valley and hill, the joys of beautiful prospects in this land

> . . . garlanded with pine
> And luscious grape-vines, 'neath whose vaulted skies
> Of blue eternal marble mansions rise,
> And roseate flowers from every lattice shine.

Italy throughout all her length is indeed a land of bright skies and glowing landscapes. Very rarely indeed is there a dull stretch of country, and every province can offer some attractions—Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, Venetia, Emilia, Tuscany, the Marches, Umbria, Lazzio, the Abruzzi and Molise, Campania, Apulia, Basilicata, and Calabria, not forgetting the islands of Sardinia and Sicily.

PALLANZA FROM ISOLA BELLA, LAKE MAGGIORE

CHAPTER XIII

SOME LESSER ITALIAN CHURCHES

Apart from the most famous Italian churches such as St. Peter's, Rome; St. Mark's, Venice, and the Cathedral of Milan, there are a score or more of Christian shrines scattered over Italy which have world-wide interest; and then again a hundred or more of village churches worthy of a pilgrimage, if time served, because of some beautiful legend or some famous bit of painting or sculpture. Let us glance at a few of the minor churches of Italy.

At the outset one may note with satisfaction that a change is coming over Italy in regard to the treatment of church buildings and church services. Formerly the visitor to this, a chief centre of Christianity, was liable to have his sense of reverence seriously attacked by the slovenliness, the disorder, the dirt even, of many

of the churches, and the perfunctory irreverence of the services. Conditions are a great deal better now. The new spirit of Italy is making religion more religious. The unbeliever finds himself under no necessity to conform to the outward observances of the Roman Catholic religion, and he keeps his doubts and his mockeries outside the church doors. The religiously inclined find themselves under an unconscious obligation to take their religious as well as their patriotic faith more seriously. The ministers of the churches, too, benefit doubtless by feeling that they are under close criticism, and that they must justify their part in the re-making of New Italy.

At Naples and in the South the atmosphere of unreality and of cynicism in the churches is nowadays most apparent. A recent observer records her impressions of a Naples church :

> One man, who has knelt devoutly before the little altar laden with gilt and gauze flowers, will go out and needlessly lash his cart-horse. Another, perhaps a member of the Camorra, will leave the confessional and commit some petty theft. The woman who looks up at the effigy of the Holy Child may lately have deserted her own infant, as is so common among the poor women of Naples. Their religion is poetry, not doctrine. They

are intelligent, but not reflective. Their ideas of eternal punishment and reward are almost medieval, and in their imagination the terrors of religion play a greater part than the ethical teachings. Their sensibility to such impressions may be illustrated by a story culled from a Neapolitan newspaper the other day. A priest, wishing to work upon his impressionable congregation during a sermon upon future punishment, filled the hidden parts of the church with men who groaned in anguish and rattled chains at appropriate points. This proved too much for the listeners. The experiment succeeded too well. They rushed in terror from the sacred precincts in a frenzy of religious fear, and many were injured in the panic which ensued. Inquiry brought the truth to light, and disgrace fell upon the too zealous Padre.

Whatever good change comes over the people of Italy in regard to their churches and church services, there can never be expected a "Northern" attitude towards Divine worship. That would not be of the character of the people. They are inclined to look upon the Powers of Heaven in a far more friendly and familiar light than is natural to the Protestant, or rather to the Northern-European mind. Perhaps, however, with less show of reverence, there is just as much real affection and worship. We have seen in an earlier chapter that the Italian Church had from the first a special character of her own.

She was more friendly to the old Pagan culture than other branches of the Early Christian Church. She avoided alike the subtle and tortuous word-spinnings of the Byzantine Church, and the gloomy, fanatical asceticism of the African Church. That was due to the national character, and it was a very good thing for the civilisation of the world that the Italian Church did adopt to an extent an attitude of reconcilement between the Pagan joy of life and the new Christian faith. Following his national temperament, the Italian of to-day, as saint or sinner, will temperamentally seek to be a cheerful saint or sinner. No attitude of gloom or dourness will appeal to him; and his sense of worship will seem always a little incongruous to some.

The Italians have their folk-stories about Heaven, which are quite gay and light sometimes, but not really irreverent. There is the characteristic story of the Spanish saints who, getting to Heaven, thought it a fair thing that self-denial should cease, and so began the habit of cigarette-smoking. This vexed the Italian lady saints, who found their voices in the celestial choir spoiled by the tobacco smoke. But what could be done? The Spanish saints could not be

turned out of Heaven, since they had achieved salvation. Finally, an ingenious Italian saint solved the problem. He borrowed the keys of Heaven from St. Peter and, opening the gates ran out, crying, "Bull-Fight! Bull-Fight." The Spanish saints loved the idea of a bull-fight even more than that of cigarette-smoking and rushed to see the spectacle. Then the gates were shut upon them, and they were not allowed in again until they promised to give up cigarettes.

To the British mind that might seem irreverent. But the Southern European is accustomed to make "gossips" of the saints, of the Madonna. To the very Deity he is more willing to yield affection than awe. For these reasons worship in an Italian church will never be quite so solemn as in a northern Gothic cathedral; and probably it has never been and never will be quite so grotesque as the street services of some of the saltatory forms of religion which have appeared in northern lands.

Among the churches of Italy which deserve to be better known to the outside world than they are, Trent Cathedral takes a place. It is built in a pure Romanesque style of the thirteenth century with a fine dome in a reddish white

marble. This cathedral has a very sweet organ built in a stone gallery. Verona Cathedral is of fine limestone and a red mottled marble. In the cloisters is a fragment of a Roman bath 400 ft. long and 125 ft. wide. This was discovered recently. Within the church is a fine font of the thirteenth century, in yellow Verona marble. Vicenza Cathedral, built in brick, is of huge width. The nave stretches across 60 feet without the aisles. It was at Vicenza that the 'cellist, Domenico Dragonetti, discovered his celebrated instrument, which once belonged to the convent of St. Petro here, and now rests in St. Mark's, Venice.

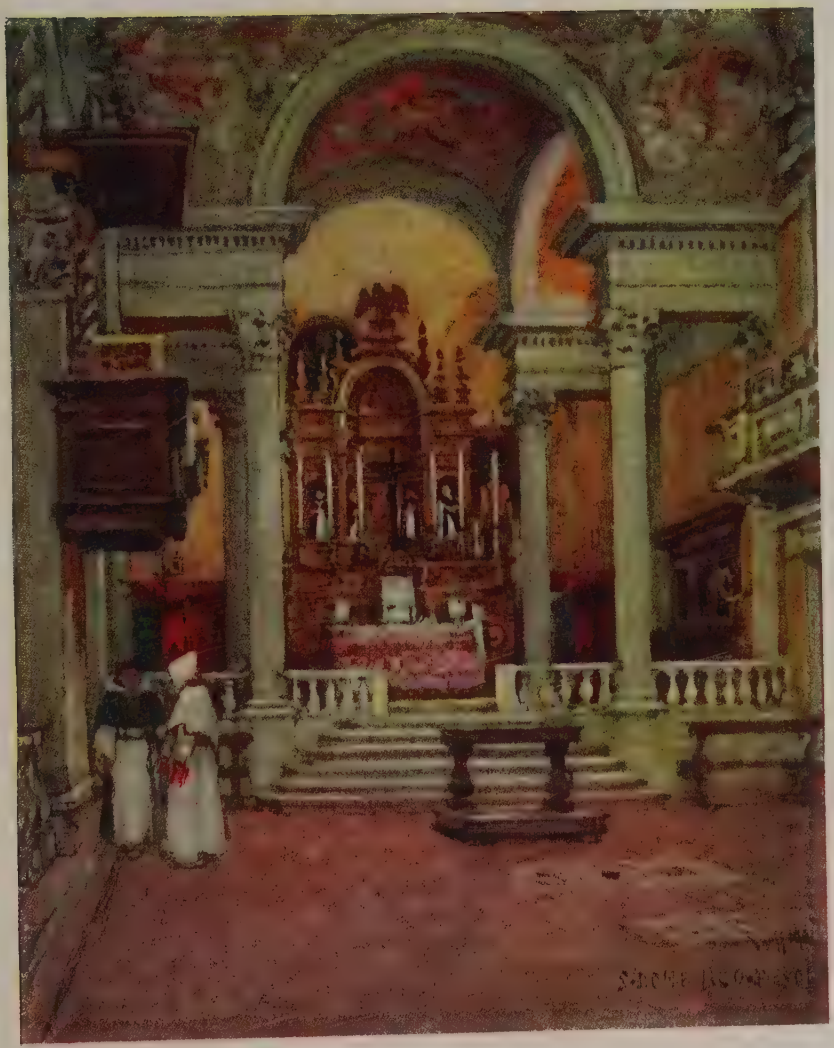
Padua Cathedral was designed in "revived classical" style by Michelangelo. It is unfinished, and has a naked air. The thirteenth-century Lombard Baptistery at the north-east end of the cathedral is more interesting. The frescoes of this Baptistery are very fine. The arena chapel at Padua contains some of the finest work of Giotti, the great colourist. The Bologna church of St. Petronio, begun in the fourteenth century, was originally intended to be the largest cruciform church in Europe. But the first design was considerably modified. Even so the plan

carried out has provided an enormous building. The doorways of this church, covered with bas-reliefs depicting scenes from the Scriptures, are regarded as the finest examples of Italian Gothic. The central doorway is the work of Jacopo della Quercia, and engaged his time for twelve years. The South Kensington Museum (London) has a full-size plaster model of this doorway. Bologna's other churches—St. Stefano, St. Pietro, St. Paolo, St. Giovanni in Monte, Santa Maria de' Servi, St. Giacomo Maggiore, the Oratory of St. Cecilia, and many more—have some claim to attention.

Ravenna has very many examples of early Italian architecture. Her most beautiful church is St. Giovanni Battista, the whole interior of which is covered with mosaic work. Parma Cathedral was originally built in the sixth century, but that building was destroyed by an earthquake, and in 1060 the present cathedral was begun. It is in Lombardic Romanesque, and is famous for Correggio's "Assumption of the Virgin," which completely covers the lantern and the dome. It is remarkable for its chiaroscuro, its wonderful foreshortenings, and the extensive range of the figures. The ignorant

ecclesiastics of Parma who employed Correggio so little appreciated his genius that they treated his painting with ridicule and contempt, scandalously underpaid him, making him accept a paltry five hundred crowns. Further to humiliate him they paid this amount in coppers. Returning to his starving family on a hot day with a load of copper coins, Correggio drank of cold spring water, which brought on a pleurisy from which he died. Some fifty years after, Titian accidentally saw the painting as the priests were about to efface it, and prevented this vandalism.

At Genoa the Cathedral of St. Lorenzo and the churches of St. Annunziata and St. Matteo are notable. At Milan, in addition to the cathedral (noticed in another chapter) the church of St. Maria delle Grazie calls the pilgrim of art, because it shelters Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper." Monza has a fine Gothic cathedral. The parish church of Varenna has a famous peal of silvern bells which are one of the delights of the Lake district. At Carlotta Villa (again in the Lake district) is an exquisite chapel of white marble in the form of a Rotunda. Above Cadennabia, on the lofty crag of Monte Crocione,



INTERIOR OF THE CONVENT CHURCH OF THE DOMINICANS AT SAN DOMENICO DI FIESOLE

By kind permission of Colonel Goff

is the little pilgrimage church of San Martino, whose Madonna is carried in procession when long droughts threaten the crops.

The churches of the Italian Riviera are rich in legends. A typical one is that of Montallegro, where, in 1557, the Virgin appeared to a peasant on the top of the mountain and gave him a sacred picture of herself. The peasant, who had been a deaf mute, recovered his hearing and speech, and rushed down to Rapallo crying out the miracle. The arch-priest returned to the top of the mountain with him and found the sacred picture, which he carried down the mountain, promising the people that it should be exposed for their veneration in the church the following day. Next morning the picture was discovered on the top of the mountain in the exact spot where the Madonna had given it to the peasant. It was carried back to Rapallo, this time with great pomp and ceremony, as the people thought its return to the mountain was due to the lack of veneration in its treatment the previous day. It was carefully locked away behind the altar at night, but the next morning it was again missing, and was again found to have been transported to the hilltop. Then the

Rapallese understood what was the wish of the Holy Mother, and they built the church of Monte Allegro on the spot. A rugged hill was levelled for the site; old and young, rich and poor, toiled to complete the work. A year later, in July 1558, the church was consecrated, and the Madonna's gift set up in its shrine. This picture (by some ascribed to St. Luke) depicts the death, or " blessed sleep " of the Virgin.

Ferrara has a very good cathedral; as have also Piacenza and Modena (an eleventh-century building). The Cathedral of St. Ciriaco at Ancona is a noble basilica of the eleventh century. Fano has several fine churches. At Fiesole is a beautiful Benedictine Abbey. Pisa, the city of the leaning tower, has a grand dome with bronze doors, the work of Ciambologna, and a Baptistery of the twelfth century in white and blue marble. At Pistria the Baptistery is by Niccolo Pisano. At Perugia the College and the Chapel del Cambio, the Cathedral of St. Lorenzo, the Churches of St. Domenico, St. Severo, St. Pietro, and the San Bernardino Oratory, are all of interest. Orvieto has a fine church in the Ogival style, with frescoes by Fra Angelico and Signorelli.

But enough churches have been enumerated to engage the earnest student of architecture a lifetime, the traveller for a year. In truth, there is not a corner of Italy which has not some interesting churches.

CHAPTER XIV

SICILY

SICILY, which Garibaldi and his Thousand gave to United Italy, can boast of a civilisation older and a history more interesting than Italy herself, and her beauty is as entrancing.

Pre-Homeric Greece knew Sicily, her volcanoes, her wild coasts, her curious inlets, well. In the Homeric stories, especially in the *Odyssey*, Sicily is the scene of many adventures of heroes and gods, generally grim and terrible adventures. The volcano Etna was the uneasy tomb of the living Enkelados, one of the children of the Earth. Later it was the Forge of Vulcan. In another legend it was the entrance to the halls of Pluto. Hercules wandered over Sicily, and Ulysses worsted there by his wiles the giant Polyphemus of the single eye (modern scientific research, by the way, seems to point to the fact that originally some race of mammals had but a single eye).

After the age of legend the misty history of Sicily shows a Mediterranean people there, called the Sikels, being gradually driven back from the coast and into the mountains by Phoenician invaders, coming first as traders and then as colonists. Some seven hundred years before Christ another invader appeared in Sicily, the Greek, frankly coming from the first as a colonist and founding Naxos in 735. Greek and Phoenician rivalry seems to have settled down to a tacit truce, which left the west side of the island to the Phoenicians, the east side to the Greeks. But the Sikels still held their own in the interior, and doubtless raided the colonies on the sea-coast whenever they had the chance. On one occasion they attempted a general war to oust the invaders altogether. That war failed.

In the sixth century before Christ the African power of Carthage — originally, no doubt, a Phoenician colony—began to spread its sway over the Mediterranean; the Phoenician colonies of Sicily gave tribute to her willingly enough. Not so the Greek colonies. They took upon themselves the first burden of withstanding Carthage, long before Rome was ready as the

champion of the white races against coloured invasion, and withstood the apparently unequal contest with success.

But before their great struggle with Carthage the Sicilian Greek colonies had to face foes of their own blood. The expedition of Athens against the Corinthian colony of Syracuse remains as one of the most memorable wars in the world. It was reported by the first and the greatest of war correspondents, Thucydides, and it was responsible for the fall of the power of Athens, which had promised at one time to do for the world what Rome afterwards accomplished,—spread by conquest the knowledge of civilisation. It was in the year 415 that an Athenian force sailed against Syracuse with the famous Alcibiades as one of its generals. At first success seemed to attend the expedition, until Sparta and Corinth resolved to strike at Athens by helping the beleaguered Sicilian city, and then the tide of war turned. Athens responded with another effort, and Demosthenes appears on the stage of the Syracusan war as one of the Athenian leaders. This expedition, too, failed, after an early promise of success, and the whole Athenian force was destroyed. With it perished the

supremacy of Athens in Greece and the hope of an Athenian Empire over Europe.

Not twenty years after, Syracuse faced the power of Carthage under Himilkon and, led by the tyrant Dionysios, beat back the naval and land power of the African Semitic power. Thus she postponed for a time the risk, which Rome had afterwards to face, of destruction by the naval strength of Carthage. After those two great wars Syracuse in the year 214 B.C. faced a third. She stood in the way of the Roman power then, and for three years kept that power at bay. Archimedes was the Syracusan hero of the siege, and the tale of the scientific and chemical devices which he brought to bear against the Romans is one of the most engrossing in the world. But the stubborn, persistent Roman finally conquered. Syracuse fell in the year 212 B.C., and after that Sicily was a Roman province, to be plundered in a monumental way by some of the later administrators of her conqueror. Fertile Sicily was cultivated under the Romans by slave labour, and two great slave wars were waged in the island, and began a long series of tragedies.

With the fall of the Roman Empire Sicily

was ravished by one invader after another,—the Goths, the Vandals, the Byzantine emperors, and finally the Saracens, under whose rule she remained for a century. Then a Norman conquest restored Sicily to Christian rule, and in the eleventh century, under her Norman kings, Sicily was one of the most brilliant kingdoms of Europe. She became, later, part of the old German Empire, then fell to the rule of the French (an incident of the time was the massacre of 1282, known as the Sicilian Vespers), then to the rule of Spain. Almost every generation brought a change of government to the unhappy island. Now she was free, now she was under the French Bourbons, then for a period free under British protection, then restored to the Bourbons, and finally in 1860 won by Garibaldi for United Italy.

It is a great, a wonderful history, stretching back to the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians, linking up with the greatest men of Greece and of Rome, and carrying the story of the world forward as Sicily became a battle-ground through the Middle Ages of the fierce fights between Asia and Europe, which began with the siege of Troy and were continued but yesterday with the war

of the Balkan States against the surviving remnants of the Turkish power.

The Sicily of to-day is a gradually improving but still desperately poor province of Italy. During all her heroic history Sicily got little advantage of blood from the great peoples who fought great battles on her soil. The island missed the great Nordic invasion which put a stiffening into the mainland of Italy at a time before the dawn of history. The Phoenicians and the Semites from Africa corrupted rather than enriched the human type in Sicily. The Norman invasion did not result in any great mixture of blood with the original inhabitants. The people of Sicily remained very much like the original Mediterranean type—eager, intense, lovable, but lacking the steady qualities from the Northern blood.

Still Sicily is progressing now. Her area is 9860 square miles. About 150 million gallons of wine are annually produced in Sicily, besides over 7,700,000 gallons of olive-oil, and 2500 million oranges and lemons. Nineteen-twentieths of the sulphur consumed in the world was formerly drawn from the Sicilian mines, but the sulphur industry declined owing to American competition and the production decreased. Thanks to the

timely measures taken by the State lately this Sicilian sulphur trade has revived. Other Sicilian mineral industries are the digging of common salt and rock salt, asphalt mining and the exportation of pumice stone. Deep-sea fisheries give employment to some 20,000 Sicilians. Among other Sicilian industries, the preparation of citric acid and the preserving of vegetables are the most important.

Syracuse has declined in importance since the heroic days of antiquity, and the present capital of Sicily is Palermo, situated on a small bay, open towards the east, enclosed by a fertile plain beyond which rises a semicircle of mountains, called the Conca d' Oro. Its earliest buildings date from the time of the Norman kings, whose palaces and churches were built in the Saracen and Byzantine styles. The museum, the richest in the island, contains objects from prehistoric tombs and architectural fragments from Selimus. Palermo is a favourite winter resort, enjoying as it does a delicious climate, "unsurpassed in the whole world," says a Sicilian railway advertisement, which can be taken in this case with less than the usual allowance for exaggeration.

COAST NEAR TRAPANI AND ISLAND OF AIGOUSA

Scene of the Roman Naval Victory, 242 B.C.

The Palatine Chapel with its Byzantine mosaics is the chief architectural beauty of Palermo. Regarding that chapel I am tempted to quote from the eloquent description by Spencer C. Musson in *Sicily*:

On first entering, one is conscious of nothing but an overmastering sense of colour, that seems not only to cover arch, wall, and roof, but to lurk in every shadow, to palpitate in the air. Then, piece by piece, we realise a wealth of decoration, a profusion of costly material, a prodigality of exquisite workmanship that, I should say, can be nowhere else found crowded into a similar space. As the eye commences to dwell with individual delight on different objects, one is almost bewildered at the lavish completeness that has left no part of the building or its furnishing unadorned. Yet this universal and minute finish in no way destroys artistic breadth and harmony; the whole is wrapped in a large solemnity, a delicate, unworldly charm in which detail is absorbed unless we care to observe it. It is here that Wagner is said to have conceived the mystic chapel of the Holy Grail, which was as an arching forest-glade, wrought over with gold and precious stones.

The plan is a combination of the Greek and Latin arrangement, with three terminal apses. The arches throughout are Saracenesque, rising straightly for a little space before taking the inward curve. . . . The details of the delicate picturing can only be made out with difficulty, and it is perhaps well that this is so, as much of it is more what we should expect in Aladdin's palace than in a Christian church. In these dim and lofty recesses, the Arab craftsman has allowed himself a free

hand—free, indeed, from Islamic as well as Christian restrictions. With an exuberance of imagination that recalls Persian and Indian, rather than Saracenic design, he has crowded within a maze of floral decoration, bordered by Cufic lettering, scenes from Oriental life and legend, chess-playing and drinking, games and hunting, music and dancing, beasts, birds, and composite monsters.

Other architectural beauties of this charming city, garlanded as a bride with her orange groves, are the Cathedral, the Martorana, the Abatelli Palace, the Palace of the Chiaramonti, the churches of Santa Cita, St. Lorenzo, St. Cataldo, St. Giovanni degli Eremiti, and the Ziza, the Cuba and Cubol—remains of a Grand Park of the Norman kings. Near by at Moureale is a Cathedral which is said to represent the finest example of Byzantine art extant. Other architectural wonders of Sicily are the ruins of the Doric temples of Agrigentum and of Segesta; the grand Graeco-Roman temple at Taormina, with Mt. Etna in the background; Catania with fine Graeco-Roman remains; some good Norman work at Aderno and Castel Vetrano; Cefalu with splendid Norman mosaics; San Giuliano having the remains of the temple of Venus; Randazzo, where there is an interesting

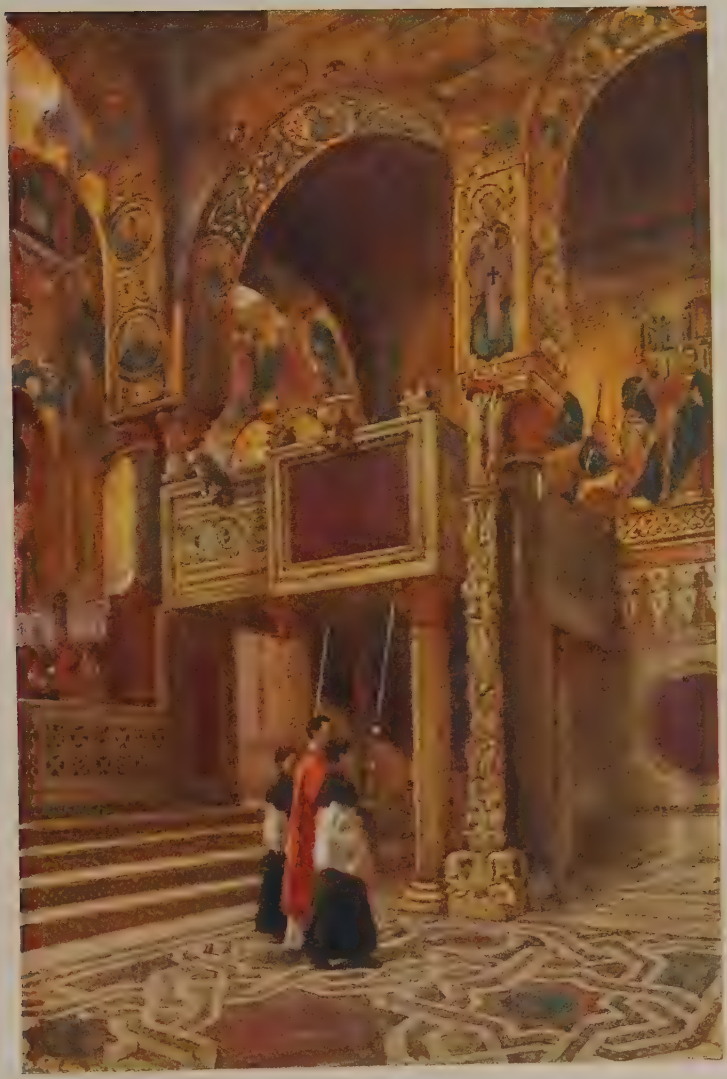
Arab-Norman church ; and Termini with remains of great Roman baths.

To write of Sicily without mentioning the Mafia is impossible. As the Camorra is to Naples the Mafia is to Sicily, but with more terrible traditions and kept to a more blood-thirsty resoluteness by the tradition of the vendetta. The Sicilian people are ardent, impulsive, though not, one would say, naturally cruel or blood-thirsty. But the legacy of many centuries of misrule is a distrust of all government and a tradition of personal revenge which is responsible for the Mafia.

What the objects of this secret society are to-day no one can tell. In more unhappy times it was the shield of the Sicilian peasant against his tyrants, the organisation by which he could answer injustice with assassination. To-day the Government is no longer the enemy of the people. Not perfect at all, not always sympathetic towards this Ireland of her United Kingdom, Italy honestly tries to do her best in the main for Sicily. But the Mafia remains to shield private crime, to encourage sedition, to levy upon thrift. The task of uprooting it seems hopeless. But it shows a tendency to yield slowly to the gradual

growth of prosperity and the fuller recognition of the identity of Sicily's national interests with those of Italy.

An unfortunate fact about the Mafia is that it has crossed the water with Sicilian emigrants, and under the name of The Black Hand is firmly established in the United States. There it seems to have degenerated from any national or political sanction it might ever have had, and to have become merely an extortionate and vicious instrument of blackmail, of mercenary assassination, of kidnapping, and other loathsome forms of crime. Perhaps something of a local cause has helped its vile growth in New York, for in Australia, where there are very many Sicilian colonists, I have never heard of any Mafia crimes.



PALATINE CHAPEL, PALERMO

ENVOI

It would not be fitting to close this brief account of Sicily and of Italy on the gloomy note of the Mafia. That is but one stain (there are other stains—all are eradicable) on the national life of a country which, amid scenes most wonderfully blessed by Nature, amid the grandest monuments of human thought and action that the world knows, is setting herself the task of organising a new national life which shall prove worthy of the tradition of the ordered greatness of the Roman Empire, of the intellectual and artistic fervour of the Renaissance. Every civilised man must look upon that effort with sympathy and with a wish to give it assistance, for every civilised man must in honesty admit the great debt that his life owes to this little Italian peninsula. If he can thrill to the thought of the great ancient writers, let him thank Italy, which guarded and added to the lore of Greece;

if his eye can carry to his brain a sense of joy in beautiful lines or fine colours, let him give praise to Italy, the guardian, the creator of Art. For that he can enjoy in settled security his life and property, let him also own a debt of gratitude to Italy, which once civilised the world; and then again cherished a spark of that civilisation from the Barbarian flood to light up once more the lamps of the world.

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